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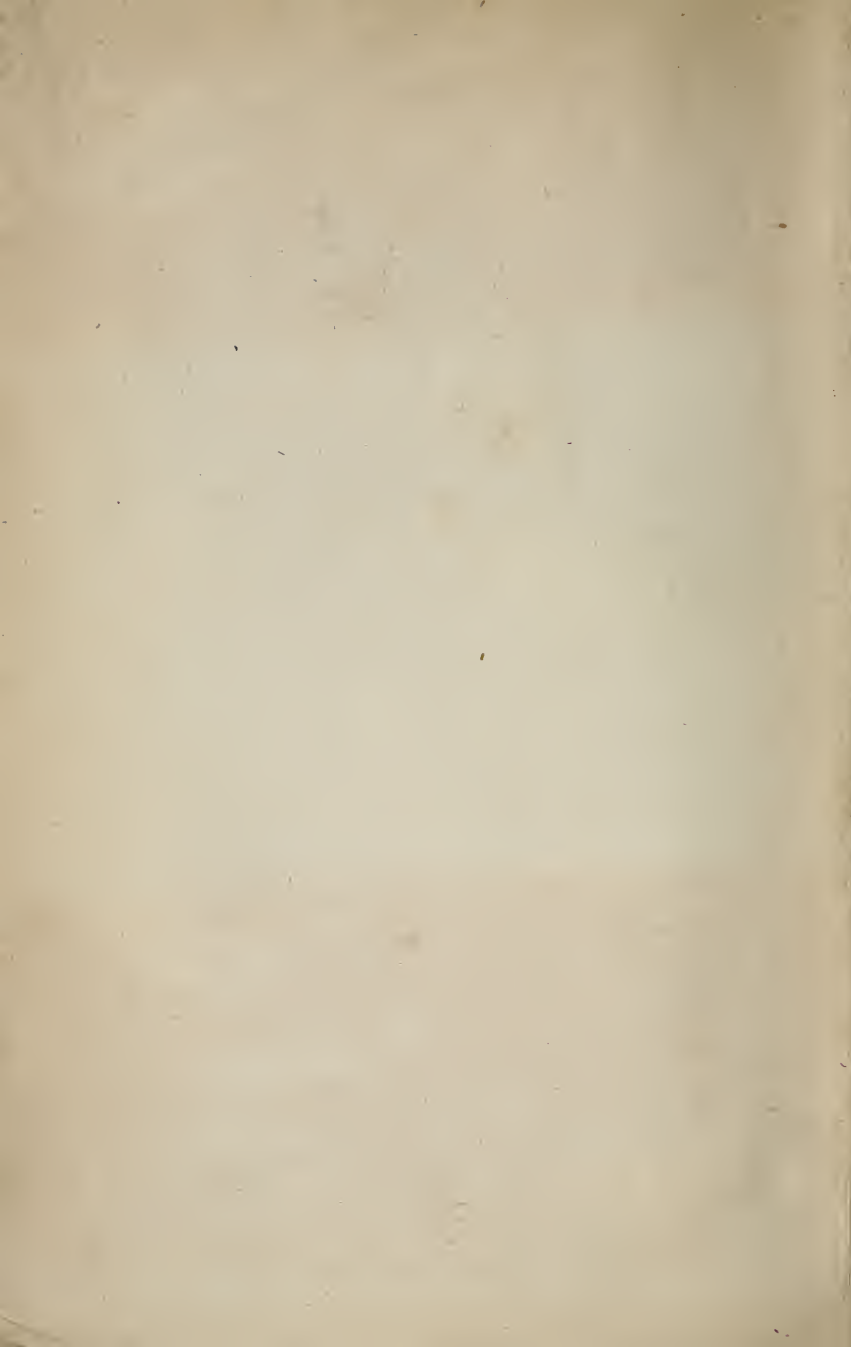
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A FAMILY PARTY  
IN THE  
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*AND OTHER STORIES.*

BY  
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*IN THREE VOLUMES.—VOL. I.*

London:  
CHATTO AND WINDUS, PICCADILLY.  
1877.

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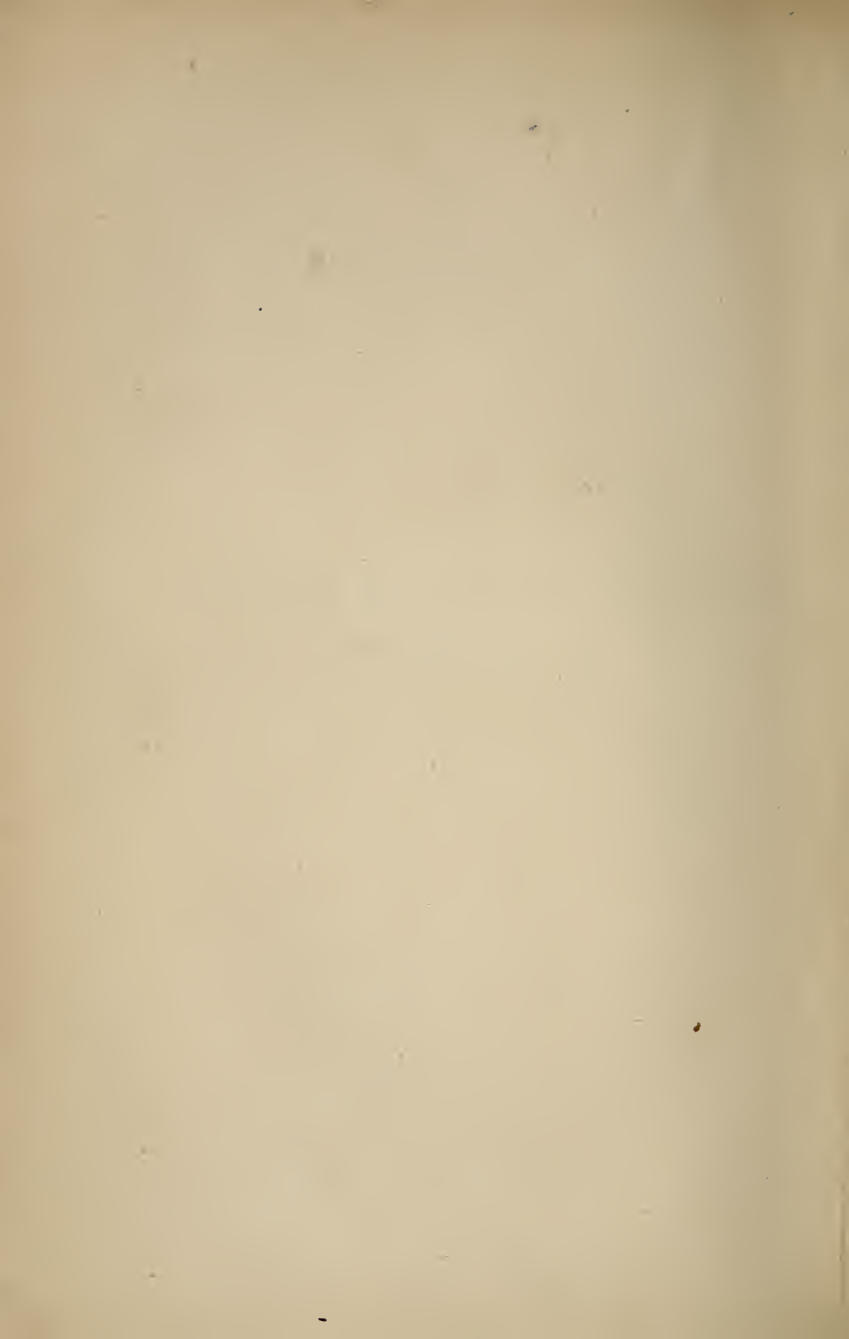
## CONTENTS OF VOL. I.

|                                                         | PAGE |
|---------------------------------------------------------|------|
| A FAMILY PARTY IN THE PIAZZA OF ST. PETER ...           | I    |
| GIULIA VARANI; OR, ST. PETER'S DAY AT<br>BELLUNO ... .. | 127  |
| THE ATKINSES AT ROME .. ...                             | 155  |





A FAMILY PARTY IN THE PIAZZA  
OF ST. PETER.



# A FAMILY PARTY IN THE PIAZZA OF ST. PETER.

## CHAPTER I.

IT is a lovely morning in June, and Rome is looking beautiful exceedingly, with a beauty that is never seen by nine hundred and ninety-nine persons out of every thousand of the visitors from every part of the world who yearly throng the Eternal City. The race of tourists are "servum pecus," as Horace calls "imitators," perhaps even more markedly than the rest of our imitative kind. They follow each other over the same gap in the same hedge. They do this year exactly what they did last year. This Roman Pactolus begins to ebb immediately after Easter, and the genuine Roman world is left to live and enjoy itself after its own native fashion.

And this it was preparing to do in a special manner on the morning in question ; for that June morning was one of the greatest and highest of Rome's high days and holidays. On the sixtieth day after Easter in every year, the Roman church celebrates the festival of the "Corpus Domini"—in every year from the thirtieth of the thirteenth century, when a heavenly vision commanded the blessed Giuliana of Mont Corneillon, near Liège, to establish the ceremony, till the year 1870, when, after six hundred and forty anniversaries, it took place in Rome for the last time probably for evermore.

But matters had not yet come quite to that pass with the city and its eternities ; and on the occasion to which the reader's attention is invited there were yet two or three more Corpus Domini celebrations to come.

It was the most delicious hour of all the twenty-four in a Roman June day—the hour after sunrise—on that high festival, that a couple of girls emerged into the vast open space in front of St. Peter's Church, from the street called the Borgo Vecchio. This space, that lies before the western front of the great church, is divided into two portions—an oblong area on which the Borgo Vecchio opens, and which is

farthest from the church, and the much larger circular piazza at the further end of it, immediately in front of the western façade of the Basilica, and surrounded by the two vast semi-circular colonnades, which come out from the two angles of the church like huge arms. The first and smaller area is called the Piazza Rusticucci, the second the Piazza of St. Peter's; and these two piazze, forming thus one undivided space, are the scene of the great procession which constitutes the principal part of the grand ceremonial of the day.

Already at that early hour of the morning there were many people moving in different directions about either piazza; and were most of them, after considerable hesitation apparently, taking up the positions which they deemed most favourable for securing a good view of the coming show. The two girls that have been mentioned, however, seemed to have no doubt upon the subject. Crossing the Piazza Rusticucci diagonally from the end of the Borgo Vecchio, they pressed forward eagerly with an elertness of step to which a Roman of any class or age is rarely excited, towards the end of the colonnade to the right hand of one approaching the church, and there stationed themselves at

the foot of the last of the huge piers. They glanced around for an instant, and then quietly and deliberately sate themselves down on the corners of the pediment of the pier, both of them with the same action clasping their hands around their knees, prepared to wait. Just as they seated themselves the bells in all the neighbouring belfries began one after another to strike the quarter before five.

“Five less one quarter. We are a little bit too early, it is true; but what would you have; girls are sure to be first at a trysting-place.”

It was the taller and most vigorous-looking of the two girls who spoke. Both were remarkable for their beauty, even at Rome, where female beauty in all classes is more abundant than perhaps in any other city in the world. But they were markedly and even singularly contrasted in appearance.

Lucia Savelli, she who had spoken, was a superb specimen of the grandest type of the Roman “popolana,” or woman of the people—a Roman of the Romans, born in the “Trastevere,” as that portion of the city is called which stands on the right hand side of the Tiber, and the inhabitants of which have always been deemed to have preserved the purity of their

descent from the old Roman stock more unadulterated by mixture with foreign elements than any other part of the population of the city. The "Trasteverans" are also famed for their beauty of form and feature, always of the grand and magnificent sort; and Lucia Savelli was an admirable example of the type.

She was like Shakespear's Rosalind, "more than common tall," and her robust and vigorous development was perfectly proportioned to her height. An enormous wealth of glossily rippling but rather coarse raven-black hair was wound around her majestically carried and beautifully shaped small head, with an effect that to any comparing eye must have made the prevailing fashion of chignon behind and mountain atop, appear more stupidly disfiguring and vulgarly tasteless than ever. The superb column of her throat, large and pillar-like in the perfection of its roundness, imparted a noble and proud expression to the general outline of her person, which might have pointed her out to the eye of a sculptor as the very model for a Juno. Brow, eyes, lips, contour of the face, and colouring were all superb. The brow was specially noble; not lofty, but very broad, and with well-shaped contours about the temples.



Had this brow and the eyes alone been visible, the expression of Lucia's face would have seemed to be even aggressively stern and defiant; but the not small mouth, lighted up with brilliantly white and small teeth, and formed of lips the exquisite curving of which seemed calculated to express any amount of unspoken eloquence, had a world of sweetness and good-humour about and around it. And to make the presentment perfect and complete in all that an artistic eye could desire, Lucia, unlike her companion, was dressed in the picturesque costume of the true Roman "popolana," with that most becoming of all head-dresses, the flatly folded white kerchief, which a thousand drawings and pictures have made familiar to our eyes, on her head.

Ninetta—have I told you, by the bye, that the name of Lucia's companion was Ninetta Innocenti?—Ninetta was in her way fully as lovely a girl as Lucia, but her way was a very different one. As to which was the more beautiful, the question would be as absurd as to ask whether a rose or a violet smells the sweetest. Undoubtedly the one would appeal more strongly to the sympathies of men of one sort, and the other to those of a different kind; and one might perhaps be able to divine something as to

the characteristics of the man, of whom one should know only which of the two girls he admired most, with less fear of mistake than one could attempt to estimate the characters of the girls themselves from their appearance.

At all events there could be no doubt as to which of the girls was most artistically adapted to the setting in which her picture has to be presented to the reader. There was nothing specially or characteristically Roman about Ninetta. Exceeding delicacy of form, of colour, of expression, was the leading characteristic of Ninetta's appearance. She was, though by no means short of stature, less tall by an inch or two than her friend; but had you seen them apart, instead of side by side, it is probable enough that the impression left upon your eye would have led you to imagine, when both were absent, that Ninetta was the taller—so much has slenderness of figure the effect of increasing apparent height, and Ninetta was very slender. Whether it were that she wore, though it was sadly poverty stricken, the ordinary fashionable style of dress as far as the forms of it went, whereas Lucia was clad in the characteristic costume of a Trasteverina, or whether it were due to any more coquettish strain in the nature of

the girl, Ninetta's slender waist was made yet more slender by a certain, not excessive, amount of pressure; whereas that of Lucia appeared as innocent of compression as the lithe round stem of an oak sapling.

Then, moreover, Ninetta was blonde, with hair of that peculiar Titianesque tint which Italians are apt to think the most beautiful of any possible hue. There was in her face none of the brown-pink colouring which gave to Lucia's cheek the semblance of a sun-ripened peach, and spoke of the very perfection of health and vigour. She was delicately pale, with large violet-coloured liquid eyes, that looked out somewhat mournfully on the world, with an expression that betokened an emotional rather than an intellectual nature. Yet the ordinary observer would have probably judged Ninetta to have a more intellectual expression of face than Lucia. Her fair, beautifully shaped forehead was much higher than her friend's low brow! but it was also much narrower. It was a dainty, delicate, finely fashioned, and beautifully cut face—that of Ninetta Innocenti, with a slender, delicate nose, small mouth, and little round chin. Had the cheeks been a little fuller and the jaw-bone and chin a little less narrow,

the face would have been a perfect oval. As it was, the lower part of it was slenderer than the upper. There was none of the strength in the face which was so marked a characteristic in that of Lucia. It was very fair, very lovely, very excellently well fitted to conciliate love. But there was weakness in the delicacy of it,—weakness in the high and narrow, though not unintellectual forehead, and in the mobile, sensitive, and uncertain mouth and little chin.

“ Ah! that comes from making appointments with them,” said Ninetta in reply to the words that had fallen from Lucia, with a little, half demure, half arch casting down of the eyes, evidently intended not for hypocrisy, but for acting as a provocation to her friend.

But Lucia's nature was too simply straightforward for any such little comedy to be effective.

“ If I did not know for sure,” she said, “ that my *damo* (sweetheart) was quite as anxious to see me as I to see him, I should not come at all! And being sure, I don't mind waiting. Besides, the grand point is to get our places; and to judge by the way the people are coming into the piazza, we are none too early for that.”

“ All the same, I had rather be waited for

than wait," returned Ninetta, with a charming little toss of her head.

"Then why didn't you make your grand *damo* join our party here, and see if he would have been here by cock-crow?" said Lucia, with a laugh in her eye, but without the slightest shade of malice or even of pique in her heart. "Were you afraid?" she added, with a sly wink and a broad frank smile that showed all the range of her regular and brilliantly white teeth.

"*Davvero*, no!" replied Ninetta, with a *moue* and a shrug of her shoulders; "but, *che! vi pare!* How can you dream of such a thing! Why, I should not wonder if he was obliged to be in attendance on the Holy Father, to-day too, of all the days in the year. Don't you know, Lucia, that he is one of the great officers, a captain. And I shall be a contessa when he takes me to his own country."

"His own country!" exclaimed Lucia, staring at her friend, "why what is his country? I thought your friend was one of our own people."

"Not at all," said the other, with a toss of the head, which showed that characteristic readiness of the Italians to imagine that a foreign thing or person must, as a matter of course, be better

and finer than the person or thing of home growth. "Not at all! He is a great French officer, sent here by the Emperor to protect our Holy Father from his enemies."

"Oh! a Frenchman; I did not know it," said Lucia; and then there was silence for a minute or two between the two girls, while Ninetta's eyes scanned the new comers, who continued to throng into the piazza, and Lucia seemed to be busy with her own thoughts.

From these she was aroused by a greeting from one who was evidently an acquaintance, but whose appearance would have made it seem to any onlooker exceedingly unlikely that he should have been such. No human being would have supposed the new comer to be an Italian, even before he opened his lips. After he had done so, none could have doubted that he belonged to one of the branches of the great Anglo-Saxon family, either cis or trans Atlantic. He was a tall, spare, middle-aged man, with a shrewd grey eye, aquiline nose, brown weather-beaten healthy-looking complexion, good-humoured and even sweet mouth, and strong, resolute jaw and chin; a handsome man certainly, though with none of the manners or bearing of one; for men can give themselves beauty airs as well as women.



His dress seemed to be a decided protest against the rule that bids one do at Rome as Romans do. He had a plaid shawl wrapped around his shoulders over his grey shooting jacket, notwithstanding the season, an extra broad-leaved straw hat, trousers such as those which the caricaturists in *Punch* used always to attribute to Lord Brougham, and thick shoes with buff cloth gaiters over them. And over all this costume there was a spick-and-span cleanness and newness that, joined to his clear eye and cheery look, seemed almost to deserve the epithet of brightness.

“What, you here, Signorina Lucia! Come to see the show, and go in for a share in the benediction, eh!” said the new arrival, in that language so wonderfully spoken by old Anglo-Italians, and so yet more wonderfully understood by the quick wits and ears of the Italians trained by long use to acquaintance with the peculiarities of Anglo-Italian speech.

“*Sissignore!* One sees that even your worship does not keep the studio open to-day.”

“Of course not. I must see the sight as well as the rest. But I mean to go into the church, and to look at the folk streaming in; I had better be going at once. All alone, eh?—that is, I

mean, so—no *cavaliere*, eh ?” he added, glancing at Ninetta as he spoke. “Not seen Carlo, eh ?”

“Carlo will be here presently ; he promised to meet us here,” replied Lucia, with an open-eyed straight look into the speaker’s eyes, which seemed to protest against any possible idea that she was meeting her lover on the sly, or was ashamed of doing so, or wanted to conceal the fact from anybody.

“Oh, he will—will he ? Well I suppose that I shall see you to-morrow, and perhaps him too. *A rivederci*. And so saying, he walked alertly across the piazza towards the great steps leading to the church.

“Why, who in the world is he ?” asked Ninetta, who had been staring at Lucia’s acquaintance with open-eyed wonder. “What a very strange-looking man ! And how queerly he talks ! He must be one of those wonderful *Milordi Inglesi*, that they say are all so rich, and all mad. And I suppose you must have met with him at some of the studios.”

“È un uomo bizzarro quanto mai !—Yes, he is an odd fish, if ever there was one,” said Lucia ; “but he is not an Englishman. He is an American, which comes to much the same thing it seems. Only they are a new sort discovered



quite recently ; and a very good thing too. For I am sure we want them."

"Where were they found?" asked Ninetta with much interest.

"Oh, somewhere over the sea. In an island I suppose. Some of our sailors were sailing about, looking for coral most likely, and found them. And, as I say, a very good thing too, if what I hear old folk say is true, that the Milordi Inglesi have spent nearly all their money, and have not nearly so much as they used to have. This fresh sort always have plenty. I never join in the talk you hear nowadays against the saints. I think the Madonna is very good to us! And when these Americans have spent all their money, I have no fear that some other Inglesi will be discovered somewhere about, if we are faithful to the Holy Father, and mind what the priests tell us."

"I like Frenchmen best for my part," said Ninetta.

"It is quite a different thing," returned Lucia thoughtfully. "I don't see that Frenchmen are a bit better than we are ourselves, for that matter."

"Why, you don't mean to say, Lucia, that these Inglesi and Americani are any better than

we are?—why, they are *barbari*!” exclaimed Ninetta with much indignation.

“Yes; they are *barbari*! there is no doubt about that!” said Lucia, whose brain was evidently at work; “but somehow they are of a different sort. And somehow everybody seems to expect that an Englishman, or one of these new sort of English, the Americans, should be able to do things which we can’t do. And see now, I don’t know how it is, but I myself would believe what one of them said to me, more than I would what any of our people said. Now this Signore Chianquinsi” (the name that Lucetta thus did her best to translate into sounds pronounceable by Italian organs was Jenkins), “I can’t tell you how good he is, and——Oh! there is Carlo! I see him pushing his way through the crowd; and there is Uncle Tancredi with him; and cousin Nanni and little Clelia Braschi behind them. I dare say Carlo was kept waiting in order to come with Uncle Tancredi.”

“But, Lucia, dear, I never saw your uncle; he won’t be displeased at my being with you, will he?” said Ninetta.

“Displeased! no: why should he be displeased?” said Lucia with genuine surprise.

“Only if you are all together, a family

party, you know, he might not like to find a stranger——”

“*Che! vi pare!* Not a bit of it; don’t imagine such a thing. Here they come. I am sure you will like Uncle Tancredi, he is such a good, kind man,” said Lucia, whose eyes were sparkling with pleasure at the prospect of the meeting with her friends, somewhat more dancingly and joyously perhaps than was altogether due to the approach of Uncle Tancredi, genuine as had been Lucia’s eulogy of him.

## CHAPTER II.

THOUGH it was not yet six o'clock, the vast circular area enclosed by Bernini's celebrated colonnades had been filling so rapidly since the two girls had taken up their position at the foot of the last of its huge piers on the southern side, that Tancredi and the little party with him had some difficulty in making their way through the throng to the place where the two girls were. They had not to seek them; for it was evident that the rendezvous had been arranged beforehand. Nor, though some little patience was needed to thread the crowd, was the piazza yet packed nearly as closely as it would be an hour later, when the time for the appearance of the procession should approach. An Italian crowd is always the gentlest crowd in the world, so far as good-humour and the absence of all violence goes. But it is not an easy crowd to move through, for the same

reason that it is not easy to traverse a herd of bullocks. No Italian dreams of moving out of the way of any one wishing to pass him. He stands quiescent. Motion is an evil. Why should he subject himself to this evil, merely to facilitate the movement of a stranger? If the passenger must needs move on at once, let him accept the onus of moving round the obstacle. If the burly bulk which stops his way bring him also to a standstill, why it is only so much benefit conferred on him! And no Italian expects another to move out of his way. And accordingly Uncle Tancredi and his party threaded their devious way through the crowd to the pillar where the girls were now standing, having risen to their feet at the approach of their friends, slowly and perfectly patiently.

Yet Tancredi Melitta, to say nothing of the two young men who followed behind him, looked like one who would have had little difficulty in shoving any shoulders aside, however little mobile they might be. Lucia's mother, who had died so few years after her daughter's birth that the latter had no remembrance of her, had been a sister of Tancredi Melitta, who was a *buttero* of the Campagna, as his father had been before him, and as he hoped

his son Nanni would be after him. And when his sister Drusilla had married, with the reluctant consent of her family, the Roman citizen and cameo-cutter, Alessandro Savelli, each party to the match had been equally persuaded that they were making a *mésalliance*. An outsider, who had no Roman prejudices or ideas of one sort or the other to blind him, would probably have thought that the countryman's opinion on the subject was the more reasonable of the two.

If the reader has ever visited Rome, he has seen and admired many a *buttero*—a characteristic figure in the Roman streets, quite unlike any other figure to be met with in any other part of the world. Do you not remember, reader, having been struck (in the Campo Vaccino, perhaps, or in the open space between the Lateran and the neighbouring city gate) by a stalwart yet spare figure riding an exceptionally good black horse, with a long flowing tail down to his heels. The rider sits his steed admirably with a seat rather of the military sort than of our country kind, not rising in his stirrups, but moving easily with the brisk, active amble of his steed, as if they were but one animal, moved by one and the same will. And it may well be so, for the *buttero* lives mainly in the saddle.



He it is to whom is entrusted the supervision of all the horses and horned cattle on some one of the vast properties which stretch over the Roman Campagna. He has men under him for the care of the horses, others for the horned cattle. The sheep and the pigs are under other and recognisedly inferior administrations. But with the cultivation of the land, such as there is of it, he has nothing to do. This is managed exclusively by a *fattore*, whom the *buttero*, and indeed everybody else, considers to occupy a very inferior position to himself. On a large property the *buttero* would have three saddle-horses kept for him, and would take their work out of them every day of the week. One would be ready for him to mount at sunrise, a second after the midday meal, while the third would afford one day's rest in three to the stud. Besides his twenty crowns a month, not a calf or a colt is sold on the property without a fee of a crown to the *buttero*; all the ashes of the large fires used for many purposes on the land are his perquisite, and a more valuable one than might be supposed. And sundry other rights, customs, and fees make the *buttero's* position a very fortunate one. But he is well worth his earnings. It is not every man who has such



an eye for the points of a horse or a heifer, or such a knowledge of their habits in health and sickness, as is needed to fit him for his business. The well-to-do *buttero* therefore rides his handsome and spirited horse with a somewhat cavalier and slightly aggressive air and bearing in the streets of Rome, and sticks his steeple-crowned beaver, with its cock's feather in it, jauntily on one side of his head, and sits in the saddle with one hand on the waistband of his closely fitting black leather breeches; while his well-made legs, clad in leather leggings, made to fit them like his skin, and buckled with a profusion of straps and buckles, hang as only legs more accustomed to the saddle than to walking can hang.

Such was Tancredi Melitta the *buttero*, the present head of a family who had filled the same position from father to son for many generations on the same property; not one of the largest on the Campagna, but one of sufficient extent to make him a very well-to-do man. He was perfectly honest; well-informed as to the things necessary to be known for the satisfactory discharge of his own functions; utterly, nay wonderfully, ignorant of all in the world besides; entirely convinced that what he did

know comprised the sum and substance of all human knowledge; and that all who were not acquainted with that were uneducated block-heads, and all who pretended to know anything else impostors and charlatans.

And such as was Tancredi Melitta the father, and *buttero in presenti*, such was Giovanni, familiarly Nanni Melitta, the son and *buttero in futuro*.

Nanni Melitta was really a very handsome fellow, though there was a dash of barbarism about him—about the carriage of his person, the style of his garments, and the expression of his face—which would not have been observed in a Lombard or a Tuscan of similar social position. Perhaps this did not in any degree militate against his claim to be considered a handsome fellow, as certainly it increased his right to be deemed a picturesque one. The latter point of view was of course an impossible one to the girls before whom he was about to present himself. But it may be safely assumed that had that same flavour of barbarism been absent from his appearance he would have seemed less admirable in their eyes.

It would have been too much, perhaps, to expect that it should have been altogether

indifferent to Nanni whether he appeared admirable in the eyes of his handsome cousin Lucia, and of her, perhaps, even more attractive friend, whom he then saw for the first time, or not; but we may be quite sure that little Clelia Braschi, who accompanied him and his father, if consulted on the point, would have been found to hold very strongly the opinion that it ought not to have mattered a fig to Nanni what any girl might think of him save one.

And that one was very well calculated to convert a young fellow to the opinion of the holders of it. Clelia Braschi, the daughter of a *capo-cavallaro* \* on the *tenuta* (or estate) next to that under the superintendence of Melitta, was as pretty and bright a little *contadina* as eyes could wish to look on. She was not so tall as either of the other two girls; and had no pretensions to beauty of the same high order as belonged, though in such different styles, to both Lucia and Ninetta. Her bright and laughing black eyes had neither the magnificence of size, and apparently unfathomable pellucid depth, which make such eyes as those of Lucia—impostors as they often are—suggestive of inten-

\* The superintendent of the horses on a *tenuta*, or estate, under the *buttero*.

sity of thought and feeling; nor had they in them the promise of illimitable capacities of emotion and passion, which, with a certain appealing melancholy of gaze, fired the male beholder who ventured to let his own glances rest on the large, slowly moving blue eyes of Ninetta. And Clelia's attractiveness of features was of a different kind from that of either of the two other girls. Hers was the beauty of a dark brunette, of the sort called *piquante*: a little triangular face with a sharp and finely cut little nose and a pointed chin. She was probably yet more ignorant of all things in the world, save those immediately around her daily life, than either Lucia or Ninetta; yet a judge of such matters would perhaps have expected to find more of native power of intelligence in Clelia than in either of the others. For the rest, though she looked bright and smart in the best holiday array of a *contadina*, her garments were not so fashioned as to set off the graces of her person to such an advantage as those of either of the town-bred girls. Lucia also wore the costume of a peasant; but on her it looked as if it had been made and as if she wore it as a costume got up and put on for the assumption of a picturesque character; whereas Clelia wore

hers as one wears the garb that one has lived in all one's life. Ninetta's dress, on the other hand, though characterised by evident poverty, was coquettishly made and coquettishly worn, after the fashion of the city.

There still remains one person of the group advancing through the crowd to the pier at the foot of which the two girls were standing, to be introduced to the reader. The latter already knows that this was "Carlo," for though the slower and less partial narrator has left him till the last, Lucia had at once become conscious of his presence, and had with characteristic frankness left nobody in any doubt as to the relationship existing between herself and her "*damo*." Any one accustomed to Rome and Roman things and ways would at once have known Carlo Carena's calling and position in life from his habiliments;—for he was too poor a man, by far, to possess a different costume for high days and holidays. Carlo was a sculptor's workman. It was his business to chisel the marble in the forms conceived and modelled by the sculptor, whose brain indeed is the birth-place of the shapes that are to be immortal; but whose hand, for the most part, has to contend with no more



rebellious subject-matter than plastic clay. And it will be perceived at once that, great as is the distance that separates the master artist from the mere carver of tombstone figures, the difference between one of the workmen to whom the task of reducing the marble to the shape desired by the sculptor is entrusted and another of the class may be fully as great. It will also be easily understood that the fate and fortunes of those employed as Carlo Carena was employed, depend largely upon chance. It is one thing to be the slave of the chisel to the artist whose every new work makes an epoch in the artistic history of the time ; and another to do the same office for the dullard, whose most ambitious effort may perhaps succeed in recording the virtues and features of a cotton lord, or a shoddy millionaire. It is also one thing to work in this capacity for a noble-minded and generous-hearted man, and a very different one to perform a similar service for a mean-souled and jealous one.

Whether it was that Carlo Carena was an incapable workman, or an idle and careless one, or whether it was that he had hitherto been an unfortunate one, it was tolerably evident that he was not a prosperous one. He

was not wearing absolutely the same dress that he worked in at the marble every day. But it was the same in kind—a light-coloured linen blouse, and trousers of a similar material. The only attempt to turn his simple costume into a holiday suit, consisted of the addition of a scarlet sash, which bound the blouse around the waist, and a flat scarlet cap, the bulging circumference of which spread out in such a way as to form some protection to the eyes and face against the sun, and to render it a by no means unpicturesque covering for the head. But whatever else Carlo had got, or had failed to get for himself in the great world-competition for existence, he had gained, and knew very well that he had gained, the whole heart of a girl whose favour half Rome would have been well disposed to dispute with him if disputing could have done any good in the matter. But both Lucia and Carlo knew that dispute the matter who might, they two meant to belong to each other, and to be true to each other for weal or for woe, and to fight the world together. And when Ninetta had answered Lucia's little bit of *espiéglerie* with the assurance that she should not have the least fear of introducing her lover, the grand French



captain, to her, Lucia might have retorted that she was giving proof that she had no sort of misgiving in bringing her lover and Ninetta together. Not that she was at all insensible to the fact that Ninetta was a very remarkably lovely girl, or that it had ever occurred to her to think of measuring her own attractions against those of her friend. But it never could have come into her head that there was any possibility of Carlo being otherwise than true to her, or of her being otherwise than true to him. Her nature was too simple and straightforward a one for any such doubts. She had never sought to tease her lover with coquetries or jealousies either real or feigned; had told him frankly that she returned his love, when he had confided his to her; and to her thinking there was no more to be said about it—much more to be said of their mutual love—but nothing more as to the recognized fact that he belonged to her, and she to him for evermore.

Which was the handsomer man, Nanni Melitta or Carlo Carena? It is a difficult question. An artist brought to perform the office of Paris would have admitted that it was a *very* difficult question. Yet they were as dissimilar as two young men could well be;

and probably every girl to whom the question could have been put, would have been at no loss to give a decided reply in one sense or the other. But there would probably have been as many votes one way as the other. Lucia's opinion of course was a very decided one, but ought not to count for anything. Clelia Braschi's little mind, too, was quite made up on the subject as soon as ever she saw the young sculptor. But neither can we admit her decision to have any weight in settling the question. Ninetta was free to form an unprejudiced opinion on the subject; and anybody might have betted that she would have given the preference in her mind to the young artist; but the fact was just the reverse. Again, if like be attracted to like, it might have been supposed that Lucia would have been more likely to fall in love with such a man as her cousin Nanni than with Carena. She had not done so. And though her opinion must now be considered as a foregone conclusion, yet she had known Nanni before she had known Carlo, and might have fallen in love with him—but did not; and *did* fall in love very desperately with the sculptor.

Certainly it was not a case of like to like. There was none of the exuberant vitality, none

of the especially Roman characteristic of majestic largeness of development, about Carlo Carena, as so remarkably distinguished Lucia Savelli, and was also strikingly observable in her cousin Nanni Melitta. In one word, the animal nature was less vigorous, the intellectual nature more vigorous, in Carlo than in the others. Not that he was otherwise than a well-grown and handsomely developed young man. But he looked as if Nanni Melitta could have taken him round the waist and squeezed the life out of him easily. He was not an unhealthy looking but a delicately formed man, with a head set on his shoulders with the grace and beauty in the lines of the nape of the neck of an Apollo Belvedere. The beauty of the head and face, too, were of a totally different character from those of Nanni, who might have seemed a man of another race. Instead of being ruddy brown, he was delicately pale, and there was about the form of his cheeks and chin a look which, to tell the truth, seemed to speak of insufficient nourishment. But the mouth, eyes, and forehead were eminently handsome; the first sweet with unmistakable gentleness and goodness; the second large, blue, and full of intelligence; the latter truly noble, both large

and lofty; very fair, but with the unmistakable stamp of mental power in the outlines and expression of it.

If Lucia had been asked, or if she had ever asked herself—which doubtless she never had—*why* she loved Carlo Carena, she would probably have been much puzzled to find an answer. It certainly was not because he looked so clever. And I am disposed to think, that the sweet mouth had more to do with it than the noble forehead, or intellectual-looking eyes. Partly, too, I suspect that a certain strain of that feeling, which arises in the breast of a protector towards one protected, mingled in the the yarn of Lucia's emotions. It will be seen presently by virtue of what circumstances such a feeling may have been generated. It was in no way derogatory to Carlo's manhood, or to Lucia's maidenhood. But so it was, that fortune had put it in Lucia's power to be eminently useful to Carlo's fortunes.

And now that the reader is in possession of the "*carte du pays*," he may be allowed to make further acquaintance with all the members of the party.

## CHAPTER III.

“*Brava figliuola mia!*” said Tancredi Melitta, as he came up to the spot where the girls were standing. “I said I’d lay a wager you were first at the trysting-place. Carlo, here, wanted to run round to the house in the Borgo Angelico to see if you were there, and bring you to the piazza. But I knew better. ‘Let’s go straight to the place she told us,’ I said; ‘for it’s a thousand to one she is there before us.’”

“You were right this time, uncle. I took care to be early, to make sure of a good place. This is my friend, Ninetta Innocenti, uncle, and cousin Nanni. She works in pearls in the shop of Signor Angelo Lucidi in the Via della Ripetta. Signor Carlo, I present you to my friend la Ninetta Innocenti!” (The last words were said with a laugh in the eyes, and a little mock air of ceremony.) “How do you do,

Clelia? Aren't we in luck to have such a lovely morning for the festa?"

Clelia tried to say something in reply; but only succeeded in blushing and giggling. For the fact of being in Rome, and in the company of these city ladies, especially of Ninetta, who was a stranger and wore the costume of the *borghesia*, oppressed the little *contadina* with a fit of shyness.

"I suppose you have seen these fine things before now, *figliuola mia*?" said Tancredi, addressing himself to Ninetta, and looking at her with evident admiration.

"*Sissignore!*" said Ninetta, casting down her eyes beneath the *buttero's* gaze. "I saw the procession last year, but not in such a good place as this. And then—I was all by myself, too; and a holiday taken that way is not worth much, is it Lucia? This time it is something like a holiday!"

"I have seen one once before!" put in Clelia, just beginning to find her tongue, and proud to be able to bring her experience to bear upon the subject in hand; "and I remember it quite well. It was the year Santa Dei and Cecco Rossi were married, and *babbo* brought mother and me into Rome to see the procession; but I



don't think it was so fine a one as this," added Clelia, feeling it to be good manners towards her companions to assume that the coming show must be superior to all others.

"Oh, no, of course not," said Ninetta; "nothing like so grand!"

"Why, how do you know, Ninetta? I thought it was always the same every year?" said Lucia, with matter-of-fact simplicity.

"Not at all the same," returned Ninetta; "there might be the Holy Father and the Monsignori all the same; but what la Clelia is thinking of is, that a certain *giovinotto* who is here now was not of the party then."

At this masterpiece of delicate raillery, both Nanni and Clelia blushed furiously, and Nanni to the full as much as Clelia. Had he been an artizan of the city it would have been otherwise; and it was only Clelia who was able to find words to make head against the attack.

"I am sure that one *giovinotto* more or less does not make much difference. There are always plenty of them, and more than enough, I think."

This was Nanni's punishment for not having a word to say for himself, and leaving all the burthen of carrying on the defence upon her.



Meanwhile Lucia and Carlo had been saying a few words to each other apart, in a manner that showed that any attempted raillery on *their* relations to each other would have been entirely thrown away.

“He was here not half an hour before you came,” said Lucia.

“Here! What, Signor Chianquinsi here with you?” returned Carlo.

“Yes. That is, he spoke to me, seeing me here. He was going into the church to see the *funzioni*. He spoke of you, before I had said a word about you. I told him that I thought he would see you to-morrow,” said Lucia.

“No! did you though? That was a bold stroke. And you did not wait to find out whether I would go to him or no? But you knew very well that I should do what you told me to do, *tesoro mio*,” returned Carlo, looking fondly into her face.

“Well, I thought that you would not let so good a chance slip. And then, certainly, I figured to myself that you would not find it disagreeable to be in the same workshop with——somebody that you are very likely to find with il Signor Chianquinsi,” rejoined Lucia, shyly taking Carlo’s hand in hers, as they stood side by side.

"*Anima mia!*" murmured the young man, stooping his head over that of Lucia, till his lips came so near to her forehead that it was almost impossible to him to resist the magnetic force of attraction, while Lucia, perfectly aware somehow or other of what was taking place over her head, though she could not see it, gently moved her head, the least bit in the world, and whispered, "Take care!"

"But, darling," continued the young sculptor, obeying Lucia's hint so far as to bring his face down to the level of hers, and keep it at the respectful distance of some six inches, "I think—that is, I am afraid, that you don't quite understand. You are so good, and so single-minded, my own Lucia. Don't you see that——" And Carlo paused as if he had a difficulty in finding the right words to say what he wished to say.

"See what, Carlo?" said the girl, looking up into his face with open-eyed and unaffected surprise. "Surely it would be a good thing for you, if only to get away from that horrid Morel. I don't know what you mean, indeed I don't."

"No, dearest, I know you don't; and I hate to have to tell you, you are so good and innocent. But there! Don't you see that this

Signor Americano with the wonderful barbarous name—that he has eyes enough to know that his model is the handsomest girl in Rome—small blame to him for that, for he could not help seeing it—but that he would give his ears to steal a little bit of that love which the model has given the whole of to a poor workman,” said Carlo, with his eyes on the ground, and not venturing to look into his mistress’s face to see the effect of his words. Had he looked, he would have seen the whole of Lucia’s face and neck covered with a dark crimson blush, which was not one of pleasure, or still less of gratified vanity.

“Oh, Carlo! you must not say that; and you must not think it. I assure you that you are doing a great injustice to Signor Chianquinsi—believe me, you are. Why, do you think he does not know that we love each other? Do you think I took any pains to prevent him from knowing that?”

“No, darling, I am sure you did not. You are too good and too pure-minded. But this Americano—all the same for that—they think that money can do anything with poor people, who have so little of it. Tell me now truly—but that I am sure you will if you tell me at all

—tell me, do you really believe that he does not very specially admire you? Do not you know that, all the time you are in his studio, he is thinking of you and not of the work he is modelling?”

“I can tell you this for certain, Carlo—that he never in all his life said a single word, nor half a word, that an honest good girl who loves another man ought not to hear. Besides, do you think that if he meant anything wrong, there would be the least chance of his accepting you as his workman? Would he want to have somebody always at hand who would make his life not worth twenty-four hours’ purchase if he so much as looked at me offensively?—would that be his game, do you think, if he meant what was wrong?”

“It would be a very losing game, if he did,” said Carlo, with a dangerous look in his eyes. “But, how does he know that? I have seen him look at you, and heard him speak to you; and nothing shall persuade me that he does not—well—that he would not fain *amoreggiare* a little with you. Perhaps he thinks to propitiate you by taking me into his studio.”

“Well, there never was such an unreasonable fellow as you are. You think that because some-

how or other you had the misfortune to fall in love with me, all the other men in the world must do the same." And while this was being said a hand stole out from Lucia's side, under cover of her apron, and found its way into Carlo's palm, which forthwith closed upon it. "But, at all events," continued Lucia, "since one must humour you gentlemen by looking at a matter from your own point of view, supposing Signor Chianquinsi to have any such notions in his head as you suspect him of, would it not be best for me to have some one, willing and able to take care of me? I think I see Signor Chianquinsi, or any other Inglese or Americano saying a word more than is civil to me when you are there! *Altro che* four and twenty hours! Four and twenty seconds would be nearer the reckoning. Don't you see, Carlo, that the more you suspect him of meaning wrong, the more you ought to try to get a footing in his studio?" argued Lucia, mixing her reasoning with flattery according to the never-failing receipt of her sex.

"Any way it comes in the end to what I started from in the beginning, *anima mia*, that I shall have to do whatever you choose that I should do. So you have settled that I am to

go to this Americano to-morrow. And how do we know that he will have me, even if I make up my mind to work for him?"

"My opinion is that he will," said Lucia, with a kind of tone that seemed to her lover's sensitive ear to imply a consciousness that she had a power in the matter, which brought a sudden flush and frown to his brow. But he chased the feeling from him, with a touch of anger against himself, caused by his perfect conviction that the idea in his mind was an unworthy one, and did wrong to his Lucia and her true-hearted affection.

"First," continued Lucia, "because I think he is artist enough to know that he will be securing a first-rate workman; and secondly, because he has quarrelled with the man he has at present. And then," continued she, hurrying on to another argument, which in truth made the main motive of her own desire for the arrangement in question, "won't it be a great thing for you, *mio povero Carlo*, to be quit of that spiteful, mean, jealous animal of a Frenchman, Morel? Won't you be glad to tell him he may look for another hand to put his *sciocchezze* into marble? Won't you now, *tesoro mio*?"



“You dearest and best of darlings!” said Carlo, the tears of tenderness gathering in his eyes as he gazed on her, “yes, it will be a glad day when I can do that. How well you know me, my Lucia. Well then, it is settled that I am to come to the Chianquinsi studio to-morrow. But I am horribly jealous of the Americano all the same, you know. What o’clock had I better come?”

“There never was anybody that talked such nonsense as you do, Carlo. But, like other people, you will find out your mistake in time, that’s one comfort. Oh! you can’t be too early for Signor Chianquinsi. He comes to his studio soon after it is daylight. Come at six o’clock; and then there will be time to settle everything, ready for you to tell Signor Morel, when he comes to his studio, that you don’t mean to do another stroke of the chisel for him.”

“Yes, I shan’t be sorry to be able to tell him that, I confess. And that will be all owing to my Lucia. Well, I will be in the Via Margutta by six to-morrow morning. And now, *tesoro mio*, tell me something about yourself. How go matters in the Borgo Angelico?”

“Ah! don’t ask me, Carlo; there is nothing pleasant to tell, and no good to be got out of

talking about it," said Lucia, while a change came over, not her face only, but, as one might have almost fancied, over her whole person; so great was the contrast between the elastic springy firmness that seemed to belong to the girl, and to be the natural characteristic of her vigorous organization, as long as she had been talking about Carlo's interests, and the sort of limp depressed helplessness that became the expression of it when her own home affairs were alluded to. The words came from her so reluctantly, and she was so desirous of escaping from the subject as quickly as possible—not because there was anything to conceal from Carlo, for all there was to be told had been talked over between them often enough, but simply because it was, as she said, both painful and useless to speak of it—that it will perhaps be best to tell shortly, in our own words, how matters stood with Lucia in the home in the Borgo Angelico.

## CHAPTER IV.

LUCIA SAVELLI was the only child of Alessandro Savelli and Drusilla Melitta, the latter of whom died, fortunately for her, when her daughter was only five years old. The reader already knows who Drusilla was. Alessandro Savelli was a Roman citizen, and, as he insisted on calling himself, "an artist," being in his own estimation immeasurably lifted above all the rest of the world by either of these qualities, and in a still greater degree above all who were Romans but not artists, and all who were artists but not Romans, by the combination of both of them. He was, in fact, a cameo-cutter, as his father had been before him. And there have been, and are cutters of cameos, who have been and are artists in the truest sense of the term. But there are certain incompatibilities in the way, which are apt to impede a lazy, vain-glorious, utterly self-indulgent, and indolent vagabond

in his pursuit of high art. And these impediments, representing themselves to the vagabond's own imagination under the guise of "persecution of fortune," "jealousy of contemporaries," "conspiracy of the mediocrities to keep down genius," and "general decadence of the world," had reduced the "Roman artist" to a wretched incompetent mechanic, miserably paid for his slovenly work when employed at all, and more usually unable to earn a crust by his profession. He would have told you, as he told himself and anybody else who would listen to him, that he was always ready and anxious to earn his subsistence and that of his family by utilizing his talents in any manner that was not "derogatory" to his social position and his birth; the high requirements of the latter being testified to by an ancient yellow and very dirty parchment scroll, which was suspended against the wall of the den he called his home. This *palladium* bore a long list of names, each surmounted by a carefully painted coronet, and an extra dirty mahogany-coloured thumb mark near the foot of it, where "Alessandro, born in 1824," was shown to be the son of Pietro, and the grandson of another Alessandro, whose brother had been "Prelato

Domestico" to the Holy Father. Now the special effect of this document was to forbid, as by an unalterable law of nature, that any human being mentioned in it should ever employ himself on any occupation which involved anything in the shape of muscular exertion, even if starvation were to result from obedience to the prohibition. It permitted a Savelli to hang about the doors of churches, or of hotels, in the hope of picking up a franc or two from some of the *barbari*, who might wish for information of the kind which may be openly asked for, or for communications of a more confidential character. But it was peremptory against his shouldering a trunk. It made no objection to his clothing his shirtless person in an indescribably filthy and greasy frock-coat; but would have marked him with infamy for adopting a decent fustian jacket. It recognized no line of demarcation between accepting a fee for such "cicerone" services as those above mentioned, and direct unblushing begging; but was clear against blacking a pair of boots. Lastly, it by no means forbade a Savelli to speculate on the profit that the beauty of a daughter "of the house" might in any way be made to yield. Such were the singular, but

perfectly well understood laws of the "Savellian Tables;" and Alessandro, the noble Roman artist, acted up to them in the spirit of a martyr.

His sister, the widow Orsola Tortorelli, *nata* Savelli, who lived with him, was also a worthy daughter of the house, and obedient disciple of the mystic parchment scroll, whereon she also was duly inscribed. Her husband had been "archivista" in the household of a cardinal, an employment the undoubted gentility of which held duly accurate proportion to the exceeding lightness of its duties. But as the remuneration followed the same law of proportion, Orsola, *nata* Savelli, fortunately childless, was left, when the "archivist" died, utterly penniless. She had thereupon signified to her brother Alessandro, that it was necessary that she should come and live with him and his motherless daughter. Alessandro made no objection to the arrangement. Space in those days—it is another matter now—was an abundant and by no means costly article. There was abundance of it in the garret he occupied in the Borgo Angelico. The archivist's widow possessed a bed. She might bring it to the home in the Borgo Angelico and welcome. Certainly



it would be convenient to have somebody to look after the child. And as to housekeeping, Alessandro knew very well that if he had but the price of a dinner in his pocket, nothing need bind him to carry any portion of it from the "trattoria" to the Borgo Angelico. Orsola would no doubt find the means of keeping body and soul together somehow; women always did. And probably she would not let little Lucia quite die of hunger either.

Thus the family at the home in the Borgo Angelico consisted of the father, daughter, and aunt. And a miserable "home" it was as ever a young creature grew up in. Miserable it had been during all the days of Lucia's childhood; miserable, that is, as far as material misery could make it so. But that was perhaps not altogether *so* far as would seem to be necessarily the case to the ideas of people native to the northern side of the Alps. In the first place, the child-life of the little Lucia was almost wholly a life in the open air; and that air the air of Rome. In the next place, it was passed very much according to her own fancy and volition; two great things towards the attainment of childish happiness. Her education fared better than it might have done had

it not been for an old friend of her uncle the archivist, a poor, a very poor priest, who possessed a benefice which afforded him just wherewithal to live. But all that he had to do for this assured, though meagre livelihood, was to recite his canonical hours, and say mass at a certain altar in a certain obscure little church daily. And as the performance of these duties left a very large number of hours wholly unoccupied on his hands, Don Ignazio Moloni had found a not disagreeable occupation for some of them in teaching the pretty and bright little girl most of all he knew, including at least reading, writing, and a certain very limited amount of arithmetic, together with the rudimentary elements of music.

Then it had come to pass that from a very early age Lucia had begun to earn a little money by her own exertions, if exertion that could be called which consisted only in the exercise of the amount of self-denial and self-control needed for remaining perfectly motionless. In a word, when quite a child she had begun to exercise the profession—quite a recognised one at Rome—of a model for painters and sculptors. A piece of good fortune, and the rare beauty and perfection of her face and

figure and limbs, had led to this preferment. As might be easily guessed from the character of her "noble Roman" father and her aunt, no very large portion of the remuneration earned in this manner had been permitted to remain in the hands of Lucia for some years. But she had begun to take the law into her own hands in this matter at an earlier age than that at which an English child would have found it practicable to do so. And, though she had with admirable generosity and constancy never failed to devote a considerable part of her earnings to the alleviation of the chronic condition of poverty of her father and aunt, yet the fact of having the command of even the slender pittance which remained to her had made the later years of her childhood far more tolerable to her than they would have otherwise been.

But with the change from childhood to girlhood another and a far more serious order of trials and troubles had begun for Lucia. For a Roman girl her development into a woman was not early. But when she was between sixteen and seventeen, Lucia Savelli began very rapidly to grow from a tall gawky girl into a very beautiful maiden. And it was but a very little time before she discovered that difficulties

and dangers of a kind undreamed of heretofore were becoming rife around her. Very soon also, alas! she discovered that no aid, protection, or guardianship was to be looked for from those who were her natural protectors. On the contrary, she found, not with that terrible pang at the heart which another girl might be supposed to feel under similar circumstances—because the mode of her life and bringing up had not been such as to foster much of affection between her and her father and her aunt—but with a dreadful feeling of terror, that it was precisely from these “home” agencies that she had the most to fear. Protection against the wiles and temptations of poor suitors, who would endeavour unjustly and fraudulently to possess themselves by dint of cajolery of this newly found property—their Lucia’s budding loveliness—was indeed forthcoming. But when an honest and upright purchaser should be found, really minded to bid for the merchandise, and well able to pay for it, what was there to do but improve the occasion and the good fortune to the uttermost? Virtue!—what could a girl in Lucia’s position have to do with such a thing? Just as well be hankering after a carriage and pair, or a box at the opera. Virtue (in that

connection) meant the indulgence of one's own caprices. And a poor girl who was not born with any silver spoon in her mouth, could not learn too soon that she could not afford any such fastidious luxury. Nor did it ever occur to the noble Roman and his excellent sister that there could be any difference of opinion between them and their daughter and niece, as to the proper use which her beauty should be made to subserve. But the elders deemed it exceedingly likely that their Lucia might turn out such an unnatural child as to endeavour to deprive them of any share of the profit that could be derived from it.

It was just at this time, when Lucia was beginning to feel desperate, and was returning each night to the home in the Borgo Angelico with a nameless dread and horror in her heart, that she chanced to be seen in the studio of a painter to whom she was sitting—or rather standing—for a Saint Cecilia, by M. Jules Morel, a French sculptor established in Rome. M. Morel's branch of art consisted mainly in the invention of subjects and the preparation of designs intended for multiplication by the bronze-caster for Parisian drawing-rooms and chimney-pieces. He was just then engaged on

a very charming thing—Youth and Age supporting a timepiece between them,—and it struck his experienced eye that the arm and shoulder that he saw holding St. Cecilia's lyre would be just the thing he wanted. So a bargain was very soon made, and the girl undertook to be at M. Morel's studio in the Via di S. Basilio the following morning.

And there Lucia's fate for life—and, it may be hoped, for something beyond—was irrevocably decided, fixed, and settled.

The matter fell out in this wise.

M. Jules Morel, being a gaunt hard-featured Frenchman, with the face of a baboon embellished in the highest style of *tonsonial* art, of some eight and forty years of age, was of course a "*homme à bonnes fortunes*." As he had been upwards of twenty years in Italy he of course spoke Italian fluently, and began at once to talk to the beautiful Roman girl in a style of elegant *badinage*, of which she understood as much as if he had been talking Choctaw. He had had frequent experience of that stupidity which prevents the Italians from understanding their own tongue when spoken without any admixture of their barbarous local dialects, and was not surprised, therefore, at Lucia's slowness of com-



prehension. The gist of his eloquence, however, in the present case, readily admitted of being supplemented by action ; and this commentary he at once proceeded to supply in a very unmistakable manner, to the intense terror and distress of our Lucia ; when very suddenly a white-bloused and scarlet-capped man, who had been working at a block of marble in an outer studio, the door of communication with which was only half closed, stepped into M. Jules Morel's inner sanctum, and coming with one stride to Lucia's side, took her, rather rudely it might have seemed, by the arm, with two more strides walked her out of the inner room, and with three more across the outer workshop to the door, which he opened with the hand which was disengaged. Then he spoke for the first time—

“ You had better go away from this place and not come back here any more, Signorina. Tell me where you live. I will settle with M. Morel for you, and if you will permit me, I will call at your home, and let you know the result. Don't be alarmed ; I will make it all straight. ‘Borgo Angelico, numero 47 ; fourth floor.’ Very well ; I shan't forget. Good day. I will be there by seven to-morrow morning.”

Lucia hardly stayed to say even “Thank

you !' but sped away, and, turning into the first solitary corner she could find, sat down and began to cry passionately. This was so unlike herself, however, that she soon stopped in angry surprise to find herself thus moved. And then she began to think a little of M. Jules Morel, and a good deal of her deliverer from that gentleman. Then she picked herself up and turned in the direction of the studio of her former employer, to see whether the preferment of representative of St. Cecilia was yet vacant; thinking so persistently as she walked of the visitor who was to come to the Borgo Angelico on the morrow morning, and of the probability that she might be disappointed by his not coming at all—yes, it would be a disappointment, there was no denying that—that to her extreme surprise she found she had missed her way. What *could* she have been dreaming of?—she who knew so well every step of the ground. However, the false turn was soon remedied; the author of the St. Cecilia had not yet succeeded in supplying her place; never having tried, indeed, but fully intending to wait till his first-rate and cheaply paid model should be able to return to him; and Lucia was soon again holding her lyre, a somewhat less fancy-free St. Cecilia then she had been before her adventure.

Meanwhile Carlo Carena—for the reader need hardly be told that the workman in the white blouse and the scarlet cap was no other than he—was left to settle scores with the utterly astonished and no little indignant M. Morel.

That, however, did not turn out to be so difficult a matter as might have been imagined.

Carlo returned to his block of marble in silence, waiting for any remark which his employer might see fit to make. And the latter had thus the advantage of a minute or two, in which to estimate how greatly discretion might be the better part of valour on this occasion. What with a very lively apprehension of the awkward habit the Romans are supposed to have, of being unpleasantly ready with knives; and what with a keen perception of the mischief it would do to his interest to quarrel with his workman, M. Jules was not disposed to push the quarrel *à l'outrance*, or indeed to make a quarrel of the little incident at all.

“Do you know, Signor Carlo, that you were very near making me angry?” he said in a species of *lingua franca* (meaning here a very *free* language indeed) which habit had taught the workman to comprehend. “Thank Heaven I controlled myself, for when I am angry, I

am terrible, see you? When once the blood mounts up to the brain, my faith, I answer for myself no longer. But why didn't you tell me that *la Signorina Lucia* was a friend of yours? How should I know! Jules Morel is not the man to wish to poach on another's preserves. Faith, he has no need to do that! Bah! let us respect the sacred rights of the heart. But you should have told me that you had a prior title to the little one."

"I never saw the girl in my life before," said Carlo very quietly.

"*Comment donc!*" cried M. Morel, speaking in French, and staring at Carlo with very genuine surprise; "you don't know her! then, I must say, Signor Carlo——"

"*Scusi Signore*, don't say it. Remember how terrible you are when you become angry. *Don't* become angry. There is nothing to be got by it. Didn't you see that the girl did not like your way of making yourself agreeable to her. And it's dangerous work meddling with our Roman girls against their will. You would be having a knife between your ribs one of these evenings as you were coming home from the Caffé Greco, from her father, or her brother, or her lover. What's the good of getting into hot

water? Trust me that it is better as it is. *Non è vero?* ”

“ Well, perhaps it is. Only, you know—— But I dare say you are right. The first fellow in the street may pick the girl up, for aught I care. There was nothing so special about her. There are plenty of fish in the sea a deal better than *that* catch any way. Bah! I shall think no more about it.”

Nevertheless, it may be surmised that M. Jules *did* think more about it; and that his feelings towards his workman were not rendered more friendly by the incident.

And that was the way in which Lucia Savelli and Carlo Carena first became acquainted.

## CHAPTER V.

MORE than twelve months had passed between the date of the little adventure in M. Morel's studio, which had so important a bearing on Lucia's destiny, and the June morning on which we left her waiting with her friend in the Piazza di S. Pietro for the coming forth of the grand Corpus Domini procession. And in the course of those twelve months Lucia and Carlo had become all in all to each other; and more literally and exactly so than in most cases in which the phrase is used. Carlo Carena—the only son of a tenor and a soprano, who had earned a little fortune by hard work and then had lost it all by an ambitious assumption of the part of impresario of a company of singers, and had died broken down and broken-hearted within a few months of each other—Carlo Carena was absolutely alone in the world. Lucia, was, as has been seen, much worse than



alone. And what might have been her fate, had it not been for the timely accident which gave her such a protector and friend, it is dreadful to think of. As it was, Carlo was her guide, her instructor, her protector, her counsellor, her refuge. Her lover he was, and her husband he was to be, of course. That admitted of no sort of discussion or shadow of doubt. But as for the when, nothing, alas! seemed clear upon this point, save that the when could not be *now*. It was not that either of them would have shrunk from facing the world together upon the very limited and precarious means of finding bread and shelter which was before them. But marriage at Rome without the consent of a living father was a difficult thing; in the case, indeed, of a girl in her teens, an impossible thing. And the noble Roman absolutely refused to hear of his daughter's marriage to a workman in a blouse, who was not even of noble blood, and who was as poor as a church mouse, with little prospect of ever being any richer.

But besides these reasons, which (however absurd they may seem to the reader, when urged by a father in the social position of Alessandro Savelli) did not appear altogether

unreasonable to the world in which that noble Roman lived, there was at the bottom of the heart of Alessandro and of his sister a bitter resentment against this stranger—this impudent workman, who had thrust himself into their lives, with the result of exceedingly jeopardizing, if not altogether destroying, the hopes of profit to be got (in an honourable way, if might be; if not, in some way or other) out of that rare bit of property of theirs—Lucia's now magnificently developed beauty. Still, the father and aunt had by no means abandoned all hope of making this sole trump card in their hand win the game for them yet. Carlo had thus far with infinite caution and forbearance contrived to avoid any open quarrel with Signor Alessandro and the Signora Orsola, his sister. He had contented himself with vigilantly watching over Lucia; carefully frustrating, often without appearing in the matter himself in any way, every attempt to place her in situations of peril; and ready at a moment's notice, should the urgency of the case require it, to resort to any means, however violent, for rescuing her from any position of real and imminent danger.

As to the less abominable hopes, which Signor Savelli had at one time nourished, of

feathering his nest for once and all by means of a rich son-in-law, Lucia herself was instrumental in driving him to more criminal designs, by utterly refusing to lend herself to them in any way. It was easy for a father to prevent his child from marrying against his will, but not so easy to compel her to marry against hers. And, as I have said, if Carlo had not been there, there is no knowing what might have happened. As it was, nothing had happened as yet save the generation of a great deal of bad blood, and ill-will, and bickering, which made poor Lucia's home more painful than ever to her. And this was the state of things when Lucia and Carlo, while waiting for the procession, had the conversation recorded in a previous page.

The others of the party had been abundantly occupied the while in observing the preparations for the show, and in that sort of talk, on the part of those who had before witnessed it, which such experienced people are wont to indulge in on similar occasions at the expense of their less well-informed friends.

The procession of the *Corpus Domini* at Rome is, perhaps, the most splendid ceremony of the Church as far as mere spectacular effect

is concerned. All ecclesiastical Rome takes part in it—at least, all those portions of the ecclesiastical world which can either add *éclat* to the show by their high rank, or contribute to the effect of it by the strikingness of their appearance. Thus the Pope himself, and all the cardinals, and other dignitaries innumerable—“Masters in artibus, Bishops in partibus,” as poor Barham sang—and prelates of all grades, take part in it; and the enormous proportions of the huge procession are increased by bodies of the monks of all the orders represented in Rome, black, white, brown, and party-coloured in wonderful diversity. The mere preparations for the passing of the processsion are a sight to be seen. The whole of those enormous semi-circular colonnades of Bernini are hung with rich scarlet draperies, with the armorial bearings of the cardinals emblazoned on them; and the effect of this magnificent display of colour is truly superb. Where the colonnades come to an end, at the spot where the circular Piazza of St. Peter opens into the space called the Piazza Rusticucci, an awning is erected which conducts to a vast tent erected in the latter space, beneath which the ceremony of the adoration of the Holy Sacra-

ment, the carrying of which is the theoretical purpose of the procession, takes place. And then the vast body of dignitaries, monks, friars, etc., etc., streams back again to the huge church under the opposite semicircular colonnade.

It was at last nearly time for the head of the procession to issue forth from the church. The position which Lucia and Ninetta had selected was a very favourable one, permitting the party to catch a distant view across the Piazza of St. Peter of the procession as it emerged from the doors of the Basilica, and then again to see it in detail, and close at hand, as it defiled past the spot where they stood. All the little party were more or less excited by the expectation of the coming show. Ninetta was in a high state of delightful enthusiasm, both from anticipation of the coming pleasure, and still more so from the exceeding enjoyment of her pre-eminence as the only one of the girls—little Clelia counted for nothing—who had seen the sight before, and who was therefore entitled to do the honours of the day to her companions, just as if the whole affair was her own, and the Pope and the cardinals and all the rest of them prepared and got up by her especial orders, and for her particular behoof.

Little Clelia was speechless with awe and expectation, her entire contentment with the occasion and all its surroundings being to some small degree marred by a misgiving lest the Pope, when he passed by, knowing well, as he of course did, all the sins of omission she had been guilty of in the matter of sweepings imperfectly performed and the like, should single her out by name and administer some crushing reproof to her there and then before the whole world. If such a thing *should* happen she felt sure that Nanni would have to carry her out of the crowd fainting. As for Nanni himself, he was in a perfect state of enjoyment. He had nothing at the present moment to do; he had a variety of gay and pleasant sights before his eyes; he was tranquilly and not at all impatiently expecting a further gratification to his curiosity; and, though last, by no means least, he was standing in close proximity to Clelia. He did not make use of the opportunity to speak to her much. It was quite sufficient for his enjoyment that he was close to her. His father Tancredi stood patiently staring around him. He had come out for a holiday, and thought that he was enjoying it. But the real fact was that his thoughts were away among his



droves of buffaloes and of horses, and that he would, in truth, have been happier—though he would have been much surprised to be told so—had he been there in the flesh also.

At last, when it was within a few minutes of the time, a certain undulatory movement was visible in the crowd, a space was in some unaccountable way cleared, and a handful of mounted soldiers passed briskly towards the steps of the church with much clatter and jingle. They were a small party of French dragoons, to whom some duty of keeping the line, or forming in some way a part of the show had been assigned, and who, with the ostentatious indifference to the convenience or wishes of the Romans, which marked their sojourn at Rome, as it has always marked their sojourn in every country that has known the misfortune of it, were on their way thus late to take up the position allotted them.

Ninetta, as the men rode jinglingly past the end of the colonnade where our little party of friends was stationed, became visibly much excited. She flushed crimson all over her fair white forehead, up to the roots of her lovely blonde hair. Her lips parted in a pleased yet half nervous smile, and her breath came quick and short. She was in such a state of trepida-

tion that even Tancredi Melitta and Nanni observed it, and stared at her.

“Oh, Lucia!” she exclaimed, plucking her friend’s dress, “that’s *he*; do look! I wonder whether he will see me? Doesn’t he look grand on his horse at the head of his men? It seems odd, doesn’t it, but I never saw him before on horseback. He sits in his saddle just as easy and noble-looking as if it were an easy-chair. Now he is looking this way. He sees me! he sees me!”

And Ninetta, in an inexpressible flutter, began telegraphing and kissing her hand to the officer riding at the head of the dozen or so of troopers; no “grand captain,” as she had in her ignorance boasted, but a young sub-lieutenant—one Hector de Rampont by name—a good-looking young fellow enough, though perhaps a more competent or more experienced eye than that of our poor little Ninetta might have failed to discover, either in the face or bearing of the man, any of that “nobleness” which her fancy-stricken eyes saw in them.

It was quite true that the officer had caught sight of Ninetta. Making his horse deviate a step or two from his direct course, till he was within speaking distance of Ninetta and her

party, he cast a haughty and supercilious glance at each member of the latter, and then, leaning down from his saddle, said in what purported to be a whisper, but was, in fact, perfectly audible to them all—

“To think of finding you, little one, in the midst of all this *canaille*! Be sure you don’t move from here when the job is over, till I come to look for you. I shall be able to get away immediately afterwards, and I will come here directly. Be sure you don’t stir, or you’ll get lost in the crowd, you little darling!”

And so, with another offensively supercilious stare at Ninetta’s companions, he turns his bridle, and leads his men to the place destined to them in the neighbourhood of the church.

“Well, if those are the manners of officers with gold lace on their coats, I had rather live with poor devils in sheepskin,” said Nanni, looking after the departing officer with no kindly expression.

“*Figliuolo mio*,” said his father, “he is but a Frenchman; you can’t expect the *barbari* to have Roman manners. It is probable that he knows no better.”

Ninetta turned from one to the other speaker with an angry toss of the head, dilated nostrils,

and a quivering lip, that shewed that indignation was struggling in her with a strong disposition to burst into tears.

“Oh, uncle, how can you talk in such a way! I am quite sure the French officer meant no offence. Different people have different manners, you know. Why should we expect French people to look and speak and move just like us?” said Lucia, trying hard with her eyes to make her uncle and cousin understand that they were distressing Ninetta by their remarks. Then whispering to her friend, “Never mind what they say. What does it matter? Uncle always says a deal more than he means. You’ll see, he’ll think no more of it.”

“But it was not kind of him to speak of my *damo* in that way,” remonstrated Ninetta, pouting and all but bursting into tears.

“*Figliuola mia*, how should I know it was your *damo*? I would not ha’ said a word if I had known. But if I had a daughter——”

“Look, look!” cried Lucia, glad to seize on the diversion offered by the procession, which just at that moment began to show itself emerging from the open doors of the church; “there it comes; I can just see the first banner—now—now coming through the great door.”

All eyes were instantly and anxiously turned in the direction of the church ; and the unlucky incident, which had threatened to mar the harmony of the little party was happily lost sight of in matter of more immediately exciting interest.

## CHAPTER VI.

IT was curious to observe the stilling effect which the first appearance of the procession, so long waited for, exercised on the vast crowd that now densely thronged the piazza. Strange, too, to note how very quickly, how almost simultaneously, every unit in the vast multitude became aware of the commencement of the expected show. There had been a good deal of noise in the piazza. It was a different sort of noise from that which would have arisen from a similarly assembled English crowd. There was no shouting, no voice raised in anger, and—special difference of all—no laughter. But every human being of the thousands there was talking, and the product was an enormous buzz, which, heard at sufficient distance for the general effect of the whole and not the particular effect of any portion to be appreciated by the ear, went up



in a great roar. And this roar was stilled utterly, as by a sudden striking dead of all the vast multitude, when the first banner was dimly visible a few feet within the great door, and then clearly visible as it passed the portal and emerged slowly into the outer sunlight.

It seemed as if the procession, like some strange and huge monster, crawling, flexible, like an enormous python, was issuing out of the darkness of a great cavern. But presently far-glimmering specks of light, capriciously moving, could be distinguished at greater distances within the cavernous depths, as the component parts of the monster procession were forming themselves into order within the church.

The procession is not, however, completely and definitively formed into the order in which it will proceed to the Piazza Rusticucci till it commences to defile from the gallery at the foot of the great stairs of the Vatican. For the Pope and the cardinals do not come from the church of St. Peter, but from the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican.

At the spot specified, the senior cardinal deacon, fully robed and with his mitre on his head, takes his seat between the Governor of Rome, and the first papal Majordomo. The

cardinal has a rod in his hand, and so superintends the formation of the procession, while the Pope is saying mass in the Sistine Chapel. When the mass is finished the Pope takes his place on (or in) that peculiar machine, invented and constructed for this special purpose, which is so contrived that the Pope, when raised with it on the shoulders of the trained men who carry him during the procession, presents the appearance of one kneeling in front of a faldstool, and holding the ostensory which contains the Holy Sacrament aloft in his hands. In fact, he is sitting, and a support is contrived for his hands. It would indeed be very fatiguing, and probably impossible for an aged man to remain in the required position for so long a time as the duration of the procession ; and doubtless quite impossible for most men to continue for such a time the position of the hands with the ostensory in them. Hence the necessity for that arrangement, which Carlyle in a well-known passage characterizes accurately enough as doing scenic worship with a pasteboard tail. The pasteboard tail is of course covered with the enormously long train of the embroidered white satin mantle, the due and effective arrangement of which is the care of the first master of the

ceremonies, to be performed with his own hands when the Pope at the end of the mass takes his place in the machine, and is ready to start on his journey. By the time he is brought down, the cardinal deacon has got all ready for a start, and the procession begins to move; every individual in it carrying a wax candle in his hand, and singing a special form of service, composed for this occasion, to the due recital of which a bonus of fifty years' indulgence is by special bull attached.

The procession is opened by a troop of soldiers, and at the sides of it, at small intervals, the Pope's runners, dressed in black with short laced surplices and purple cassocks, and with silver maces in their hands, see to the maintenance of regularity and good order.

After the soldiers comes a huge cross borne aloft. Immediately after it walk in their black gowns, two and two, the children of the Apostolic Hospital of St. Michael. Next come the children of the Papal Founding Hospital, in white dresses. Then come all the monastic bodies, those of the mendicant orders first, each society preceded by its own huge standard.

Those of the third order of St. Franciscans come first, thus occupying the position of

greatest humility, precedence in a procession being arranged by contraries. The bare-foot Augustines come next, with their leathern girdles and large rosaries hanging thereto by their sides. Then the long-bearded Capuchins, with rope girdles and rosaries. Nine other mendicant varieties follow, the last, *i.e.* the most honourable, place being reserved for the Dominicans.

Did the reader ever chance to see a procession of mendicant friars? It is a sight often to be seen on less magnificent occasions and scenes than those of the Corpus Domini at Rome, and it is a very remarkable one for anybody, who has a Lavater-ish eye, or any phrenological notions. The shaven scalps of the bareheaded figures show the character of the heads and faces to the greatest advantage, or disadvantage, as it would be more accurate to say. And with singularly few exceptions, the collection of revoltingly low types is quite extraordinary. From the almost idiotic expression resulting from the poor starved brow, flattened head and receding chin, to the thin lips, eager eye, and conically shaped skull that marks the fanatic; from the malignant scowl indicating unmistakable hostility to all the world outside the

cloister gate, to the pinched fox-like physiognomy telling of petty spite towards all within it; and from the utter vacancy of simply animal existence, to the heavy jowl, gross pendant, lips, and undeveloped forehead of the mere brutal sensualist;—every most repellant variety of human type will be observed among the heavily draped figures, so listlessly dragging their lazy limbs in the long crawling line. Here and there a face and head may be seen that tell absolutely nothing; never one that indicates aught of elevation, or spirituality, or nobility. In truth, how should there be such?

Next after the various coloured bodies of mendicants come the non-mendicant monastic bodies: Cistercians, Olivetans, Benedictines, etc.—“black spirits and white, brown spirits and grey.” The members of these bodies are invariably, looking at the body as a whole, less disagreeable-looking than their mendicant fellows.

These are followed by the huge cross of the secular clergy of Rome, with the pupils of the Pontifical seminary immediately after it, and behind them the priests of the fifty-four parishes of Rome.

After them troop the canons of nine different

capitular bodies. Certain small differences are observable in their costumes, indicating to instructed eyes particular privileges, or immunities, or specialities of rank, the grants of this or that Pope to the body thus evidencing them, and the special object of pride and self-admiration to the possessors of bulls conferring such privileges.

Next come the chapters of the four minor basilicas, and then those of the three principal churches dignified with the title of patriarchal basilicas, *i.e.* Santa Maria Maggiore, St. Pietro in Vaticano, and St. Giovanni Laterano; the place of honour and precedence being thus reserved to the Lateran Church, which boasts itself to be "*omnium ecclesiarum mater et caput*," even over the chapter of St. Peter's. Each of these chapters is preceded, or followed, or accompanied by mace-bearers, and beadles, and standard-bearers, and a huge canopy of red and yellow cloth, under which the special relics preserved by the church to which each chapter belongs are carried. Every chapter has also an immense crucifix borne aloft and attended by a sacristan carrying a bell, which is rung every now and then "to admonish the spectators to venerate the ensign of our redemption, or to invite them



to stand out of the way, and let the procession pass." Every chapter has its bell; but the chapter of the Lateran, for greater and special dignity, has two.

Then comes the Vice-Governor of Rome, in full episcopal costume, with all the members and attendants of the court of the Cardinal Vicar.

Then follow all the members of what is termed the "*Cappella Pontificia*," which means what in the case of a lay prince would be called "his court." They are all duly enumerated and distinguished, according to their proper precedence and their varied costumes, in various works on the Pontifical ceremonies. But they are far too numerous for their titles to be rehearsed here, especially as whole columns of Ducange would be needed for the understanding of many of them.

There are "abbreviators of the greater park," in purple silk cassocks, with large torches in their hands; auditors of the Holy Roman Rota; Apostolical subdeacons: "masters hostiary of the red rod;" Archimandrites, with lace and gold fringe; and thirty other bodies of persons or individuals, all with strange titles and gorgeously arrayed. Then come the cardinal deacons, followed by the cardinal priests, and

lastly, the cardinal bishops. Every cardinal has his long train carried by a trainbearer, and is attended by his household, and escorted by Swiss guards in their well-known mediæval costume. The three "Conservators of the Roman people" in purple and gold come next. Then the Senator of Rome, with purple mantle, whose huge train is borne by two pages. The title of this last grandee always seems to me to be invested with a sort of ironical "Last of the Mohicans" or "skeleton of the regiment" sadness. *The* Senator of Rome, all that remains of such a Senate.

Then comes the Governor of Rome, quite a different thing, it will be observed, from his predecessor, the Senator. The Senator is a layman. But this latter, the Governor, is an ecclesiastic, as he who "governs" in Rome naturally must be. And next to him marches the "Principe assistente al Soglio," one of the Roman princes who has the duty and the privilege of standing by the side of the Papal throne on all occasions of high ceremony. He is donned in an ordinary black coat, but has a mantle fringed with lace, and carries, like all the rest, a lighted torch.

Next come two high officials bearing censers

with incense (we are nearing the culminating point now), and attendants bearing the vases of incense; then the two first of the Papal masters of the ceremonies, followed by two Papal runners with silver maces, and then

### PONTIFEX MAXIMUS,

the Pope—the Holy Father—"Servus servorum," the servant of the servants of God—the successor of St. Peter—the Vicegerent of Christ upon earth.

He is borne aloft on the shoulders of men, in an apparently kneeling attitude, as has been said; and on either side of him are carried the immense white feather fans—*flabelli* the technical name of them is—carried by two of the private chamberlains, with two others of their colleagues at their side, to relieve them turn about in the work of carrying these strange and huge insignia of Papal state. Over the head of this "Servus servorum," is carried a large canopy of cloth of silver with flowing draperies adorned with the Papal arms, and richly ornamented with embroidery and lace, and fringe of gold. The eight poles which support this canopy are borne from the Sistine Chapel as

far as the first landing place of the stairs by prelates in purple cassocks, and mantles; thence to the vestibule of St. Peter's by the pupils of the Austro-Hungarian College, in red cassocks; thence halfway along the colonnade by the pupils of the Propaganda, in black and red cassocks; thence to the end of the colonnade by the pupils of the English College, all in black; thence as far as the door of the Accoramboni Palace by the pupils of the Irish College, also in black; thence to the convent of the Scolopi Fathers, by eight priests appointed by the master of the ceremonies; thence all along the colonnade on the left the canopy is borne by representatives of the Florentine nation in full court dress; and from the end of the colonnade through the gallery on that side, which brings the procession back again to the church, the poles are taken in hand by deputies of the Sienese nation (for Siena was once upon a time counted as the capital of a "nation" of its own); from them the pupils of the noble Papal academy receive the canopy, which is carried by these latter halfway up the nave of the church; and there the magistrates of Rome take it, and carry it to the foot of the Papal altar, where the procession finally terminates.

As soon as the scholars of the Austro-Hungarian College have got him on their shoulders, the guns at St. Angelo open fire and continue to roar at minute intervals till the procession has re-entered the church on its return. And all the bells ring out a triumphant peel; in a very unharmonious and jangling manner, however, for, curiously enough, artistic bell-ringing is to be found in England alone of all the world. A crowd of other attendants surrounds the Pope, among them the physician-in-chief to his Holiness and his chief chamberlain; these two alone of all the procession not carrying torches, "in order that they may have their hands free to assist the Pope should any sudden emergency require it." With them walk a "secret sweeper in cassock of serge with purple silk girdle, and laced with stripes of velvet with a border," and the Pope's butler in an ordinary black coat. The members of the Papal choir also walk around the pontiff, singing the hymn *Lauda Sion*. Lastly, the Apostolic protonotaries—"the three tufted prelates; that is to say, the Auditor-General of the Reverend Apostolic Chamber, the Treasurer-General, and the Prefect of the Apostolic Palaces"—and the generals of the monastic orders, close the ecclesiastical

part of the procession. The rear is brought up by as large a show of military as the Papal resources can furnish.

One part of the ceremony, due to the care of an official who does not appear in the procession in person—the Pope's gardener—must not be omitted; for it adds very materially to the picturesque effect of the whole scene. The entire route over which the procession has to pass is thickly strewn with bay and other fragrant leaves, agreeable to more than one of the senses.

Such was the procession which the immense crowd in the piazza had assembled to see. It was almost wholly a Roman crowd. For the vast numbers of foreign visitors, who throng the Eternal City in the winter and spring, and crowd to the Christmas and Easter celebrations, have almost all hurried off to the north before the dog-days bring the great festival of Corpus Domini with them. A few old Roman *habitués*, who have learned to do at Rome as Romans do, and live as Romans live, a few foreign artists, who have made Rome their permanent residence, remain. But, speaking generally, the "forestieri" may be said to have all gone their various ways, and to have left, during the



summer months at least, Rome to the Romans, to live their own lives according to their own devices—devices which are, with respect to most matters appertaining to the conduct of life and the method of enjoying it, very different from our devices.

## CHAPTER VII.

LUCIA had called the attention of the little party to the glimpse that was obtainable from the spot where they stood of the component parts of the procession as they defiled into order, when at the same moment a great hush fell on all the crowd. The little circumstances that had threatened to disturb the good understanding between Ninetta and her friends the Melittas were forgotten in the interest of the moment.

But it was very little that could be seen thus from the end of the colonnade. Patience was yet needed before a really good view of the sight in all its glory could be obtained; but that patience would be rewarded as soon as the procession should reach the end of the semi-circular colonnade on its way to the great tent in the Piazza Rusticucci. It would then pass

immediately before the little knot of our friends; and they would again see, at least, the grand sight of all—the Pontiff borne aloft above the heads of the crowd, as he returned by the opposite colonnade to the church. And our friends, like all the rest of that crowd of Romans, were perfectly well disposed to be patient. But patience need not exclude the dear delight of gossip—of a *chiaccheria*, as an Italian says—literally, a chatter; and as soon as the momentary impression produced by the first appearance of the head of the procession had somewhat worn off, the tongues began to wag again; and again the vast space of the piazza was filled with the immense murmur of thousands of voices.

Lucia feared that her uncle might again recur to his disgust at the behaviour of the young French officer, and his disapproval of such a *damo* for a Roman girl in the position of Ninetta. But fortunately, he was too much interested in the present moment, and as soon as the roar of voices around him made him aware that he too might talk without any offence against the proprieties of time and place, he began to cross-question Ninetta's experience as to the particulars of the sight they were awaiting. And the

gratification of finding herself in the position of an authority readily effaced from the young girl's mind any recollection of the previous offence. In fact, it was inevitable that Ninetta and Lucia's uncle should talk together, if they were not to remain silent—which would have been a thing utterly impossible to Italians so circumstanced—for Lucia and Carlo Carena soon fell into a resumption of their *tête-à-tête* respecting his visit to Signor Chianquinsi's studio on the following morning, and what might be expected to result therefrom, and what he should say to M. Jules Morel on giving him notice of his intention to quit his studio, and what he should say to "Signor Chianquinsi," as they both called Mr. Jenkins, with the perfect assurance of pronouncing his name in the most satisfactory manner. And Lucia had a great deal to tell Carlo of the peculiarities of that gentleman, who, if all she said were true, must indeed have been "an original" of the first water. Then Nanni Melitta and Clelia were on their part wholly engrossed by each other—the enjoyment of the festival to them was the opportunity it gave them of being so; though it is probable that the satisfaction of standing side by side was found by both of them to be a suffi-

cient amusement and gratification, and that the tongue contributed less to the pleasure of the occasion than in the case of any other two persons in the piazza, Clelia would from time to time try to stir Nanni up a little by asking questions, to which he would reply by a "Who knows?" But none the less was their intercourse very delightful to both of them, and so engrossing as to prevent either of them from having eyes or ears for any one else. So that Tancredi Melitta and Ninetta were necessarily forced into a *tête-à-tête*.

"Have you and Lucia been long acquainted, *figliuola mia*?" asked Tancredi, by way of saying something.

"About four years, Signor Tancredi. I was quite young then," returned Ninetta, with a little sigh, as over her departed youth.

"Quite young, eh? Why, what do you call yourself now, I should like to know?" rejoined Signor Melitta with a rather grim smile. He was rather a grim man, was Tancredi Melitta the *buttero*, with yellow cheeks, blue-black stubble beard, and deepset eyes.

"Now I am seventeen, but I was only thirteen then," said Ninetta, with an air of having triumphantly maintained her position.

“And how did you and Lucia come to make friends?” asked the *buttero* again, with very languid curiosity.

“Oh, that was because Lucia is so good. I don’t know what would have become of me if it had not been for Lucia. I used to live with a marble collector in those days,” replied Ninetta, with her little sigh again.

“And what sort of trade is that?” asked Tancredi, whose country birth and breeding had not given him the opportunity of becoming acquainted with the minutiae of Roman life.

“Oh, it is not a bad trade. We used to go round to the sculptors’ studios and buy the chips and dust to sell them to the marble cement makers, who grind them down for cement.”

“We? That was you and your master, I suppose; wasn’t he good to you?” asked Tancredi, still to make talk, rather than from feeling any very lively interest in the subject of the conversation.

“He! It was an old woman. They are mostly women who have that business in their hands,” returned Ninetta.

“Oh, an old woman! But how was it that you and Lucia fell in with each other?” again asked the *buttero*, veering back to the only point



in the matter that had any interest, and that but a very slight one, for him.

“Why, you see, Signor Tancredi, I used to go to the studios and find where there were any chips or dust to be got rid of; and so one day, in the morning early, there was Lucia just getting ready to stand for a model to the artist, and the head workman was telling me to go away, and come again at the end of the week; and I began to cry—for you see, Signor Tancredi, I had had one beating already that morning for not having found any chips—and so Lucia asked me what was the matter, and she persuaded the workman to let me—that is to say, my mistress—have the chips that day; and then we agreed, Lucia and I, to meet in the evening: and we went and sat down on the great steps in the Piazza di Spagna; and—ever since that we have been friends.”

“And do you still follow the trade of collecting marble?” asked Tancredi, thinking more of the nature of the calling he then heard of for the first time, than of Ninetta’s interest in the matter.

“Oh, no! Thanks to Lucia, I am in a much better way now. She got a friend of hers to teach me a little of the pearl-making, and then

she got me a place in one of the great shops; and I have been there ever since."

"Oh! making pearls, eh?" said Tancredi.

"Yes; but they ain't real pearls you know. Roman pearls we call them—made to imitate the real ones, you know."

"And I suppose you have got a holiday from the shop for to-day—such a festa as this—*diamine!*" \* said the *buttero*.

"A longer holiday than that, worse luck," returned Ninetta; "a holiday that lasts from May till October. We can't work at the pearl-making in the hot weather. That is the worst of it."

"Ay, that makes but a poor trade of it. And what do you get while you are at work?" said the *buttero*.

"Two francs a day, and a dinner; not so bad, if it only lasted all the year round," returned poor little Ninetta, who looked very much as if it would have been considerably better for her if at least the dinner had been provided all the year round instead of only during half of it.

\* An almost untranslatable expletive. Perhaps some such phrase as "I should think so," "I should hope so," comes as near the mark as may be.

“And how do you make out to live from May to October, *figliuola mia*?” said the *buttero*, looking at her compassionately.

“Oh! I manage to save a little during the winter; and then I get a little now and then by selling flowers in the cafés; and then, if the worst comes to the worst, Lucia helps me a little. Ah, Lucia, she is as good as a saint, Lucia is. She would give me half her own crust any day, and I would give my life for her, if she wanted it, that I would!” said Ninetta, clasping her hands and looking up to heaven very much like one of those saints she said her friend resembled.

“And how came it to pass,” began the *buttero*, who was about to question the girl about the grand *damo* she had seemed so fond of, but checked himself, remembering that the topic had already led to some little unpleasantness. “Ah, give your life for her, you say. But it is none so easy, *figliuola mia*, to give up your life when it comes close to the doing of it. Let’s hope Lucia won’t need it,” he added, with a grim chuckle that was meant to label his words as a joke.

“Ah well, that depends on what your life is. I *would have* given my life for Lucia, though.

Maybe——” and Ninetta broke off abruptly, busy in pursuing in the secret recesses of her own heart the consideration of the question, whether she would in truth *now* be equally ready to sacrifice her life for her friend; and if not, why not?

“Couldn’t your father do any better for you than to let you be beat by an old woman that lived by finding marble chippings?” said Tancredi, returning to the subject in the absence of any other topic of conversation wherewith to beguile the time till the appearance of the procession at the bottom of the colonnade.

“I don’t know that I ever had any father, or mother either,” replied Ninetta, quite as if she were referring herself to a by no means uncommon or unknown category of human beings. “The furthest back I can remember, I used to live with an old man and his wife, who always told me that I had no father or mother. I think he was a sexton of some church, and his wife used to sweep and clean the church. They both died pretty nearly at the same time, when I was quite a little thing; and then I had no place to go to, and nothing in all the world but the clothes I had on me, and a rosary of wooden beads with a little bone

crucifix hanging to it, which I had always worn round my neck. I don't suppose it was worth anything, or they would not have let me keep it," said Ninetta, reflectively.

"And where do you live now?" added the *buttero*, after a short pause.

"With Siora Marta, a widow woman in the Via de Serpenti; she works at the pearl-making, and so does her daughter. Lucia found the place for me. Siora Marta was an acquaintance of hers. It is a very good *quartiere*, on the fourth floor, you know; and I have got a little room all to myself," said Ninetta.

All the time the latter part of this dialogue had been going on the *buttero* had unconsciously retained in his hand Ninetta's rosary with the little crucifix attached to it, dangling it to and fro without thinking of it. But just then the sound of the chanting, which had before reached them, mingled with the ringing of bells, and the occasional boom of the cannon from St. Angelo, as a far-off indistinct murmur, became suddenly louder and clearer, as the head of the procession rounded the curve of the semicircular colonnade, and in the next minute the advanced guard of soldiers began to defile in front of the little party standing at the foot of the last pier

of it. Of course all conversations, even those of a much more interesting nature than that between the *buttero* and Ninetta were suddenly broken off, and everybody faced about towards the line of the procession, and stood on tiptoe, and lived only in their eyes.



## CHAPTER VIII.

IN the next minute the huge cross which opens the purely ecclesiastical part of the procession hove in sight, advancing very slowly, and then the children and young men of the Papal schools and hospitals. But this was not the interesting, or indeed, it must be owned, a very edifying, part of the show. The children walked two and two, either chattering or quarrelling with each other. One mischievous urchin would try to hold his torch so as to cause the wax to fall on the dress of the boy who preceded him. Another would push against his yoke-fellow, like an ill-broken coach-horse leaning on the pole. This would produce retaliating elbow nudges in the ribs from the aggrieved party. Another, while pretending, with a ludicrous attempt at assuming a devout bearing, to be wholly engrossed

by the proper business of the occasion, would be slyly endeavouring to put his feet on the toes of his neighbour; and a fourth, from sheer vacancy and inattention, would let his candle fall into an almost horizontal position, dropping the wax all about, and rapidly destroying the torch. Every now and then some of the various attendants whose business it was to see to the decorous ordering of the procession, would observe and reprove these offenders. But it was remarkable that they did so in the most perfunctory and plainly inefficacious manner, appearing to be neither shocked, scandalized, nor surprised in any way at such behaviour. Nor did any of such improprieties appear to excite the smallest degree of disapprobation, or even to attract the attention of any person in the crowd.

But then succeeded the long train of all the different bodies of friars, and with them began the interest of the sight. It was noticeable and curious that these mendicant friars evidently stood higher in the estimation of the crowd, and were objects of greater interest to them, than the members of the non-mendicant monastic bodies which followed them. As far as regards any real title to respect, there can be

no doubt that the non-mendicant orders possess more of it than the mendicants. They are less grossly ignorant, less filthily dirty, less in the habit of mischievously meddling with lay affairs. Perhaps, however, all these differences are the very causes which operate to produce the greater popularity of the bare-footed Franciscan or Dominican. The Franciscan, however, beats his rival, the Dominican, in the affections of the populace. It is the son of St. Francis, ignorant even of matters ecclesiastic or theologic to a perfectly incredible degree, similar in manners, in thoughts, and to a great degree in habits to the lowest strata of the population, often at war in his heart with constituted civil authority, and even with all constituted ecclesiastical superiors, save those of his own convent and the Supreme Pontiff—it is this democrat of the Church that can very often most powerfully influence the classes at the broad base of the social pyramid.

Many of the poorest people among the crowd, women especially, knelt as the monastic orders moved past them, rising to their feet again when the different bodies of the secular clergy defiled from under the colonnade.

But it was not till the great dignitaries of

the Church came in view that the part of the show for the sake of which the crowd had really come there began. Then, indeed, the procession became "as good as a play." There was no symptom among the crowd of any feeling of reverence, or of liking, or the reverse, for these "purple princes" of Christendom. They were regarded just as so many splendidly got-up theatrical figures might have been stared at. The prevailing sentiment was evidently one of good humour, the result of being treated to a diversion for which there was nothing to be paid.

But it was not till the great chief actor in the play hove in sight that the interest was at its climax. At the first glimpse of the huge machine borne aloft on men's shoulders, on which the Pontiff seemed to kneel in an attitude of the most devout and earnest prayer, the whole of the crowd in the immediate vicinity of the procession sunk on their knees. The movement was so sudden and so general that the effect produced was a singular one. It was as if some irresistible simoom had passed over the mass of human beings and prostrated them all. This lasted, however, but for a very few minutes. The gorgeous pageant passed on, the

crowd breathed again, rose to a standing position, and forthwith returned to their chattering.

The time which had to elapse before the huge procession had passed to the other side of the piazza on its return to the church would have appeared intolerably long to any one of trans-Alpine race. But the Roman crowd passed the hours in perfect and manifest contentment. They had nothing to do—no demand on them for any sort of exertion of body or mind; a lovely sky was overhead; and they had unlimited facilities for measureless talk. What could be desired more? And so the time passed, till nearly at noon the vast cool-looking cavernous mouth of the colossal church had little by little swallowed up again all the multitude that had that morning come forth from it. And then the crowd began leisurely and saunteringly to stroll away from the piazza.

In making the family arrangements for the holiday pleasuring, it had been understood that Uncle Tancredi, the well-to-do *buttero*, invited the whole party, including Signor Carlo Carena, to an *al fresco* repast at a certain *osteria* situated amid the vineyards between the convent of St. Gregory and the Lateran, which was celebrated for the goodness of its wine *dei Castelli Romani*,

and where there was a beautiful *pergola* under which they could have their banquet. A *pergola* is an arrangement of upright and horizontal poles over which vines are trained, a most picturesque mode of cultivating them, and affording a delicious shade to walk or to sit under. Uncle Tancredi would have preferred dining in the upstairs guest-chamber of the little *osteria*; but to the girls the eating *al fresco* was half the fun; and of course the young men thought that the best and pleasantest which most pleased their sweethearts. So when the piazza began to be emptied, our friends prepared to move off to the promised treat. Uncle Tancredi had not failed to extend his invitation in very courteous terms to Ninetta, when he found that she was there as Lucia's friend. But poor Ninetta hardly knew what to do about it. Her grand French lover, who was to make her a *contessa*, had, as has been seen, especially charged her to remain where she was till he should come back to her. But she did not like remaining there alone. And then the promised dinner, at that season of the year when dinners were so scarce with her, was a temptation that her young appetite could with difficulty resist. And it would be so delightful, so utterly paradisiacal under the *pergola*, out away there



by the Lateran—as good every bit as being in the country. And then, again, on the other hand, she had seen the little party of French troopers trotting away down the piazza as soon as ever the procession had re-entered the church. Whether her Hector had been with them she had not been able to see, and she hesitated painfully awhile whether she would go with her friends or not. She looked wistfully round the wide piazza, now nearly empty, and saw nothing save a few lingering peasants and Romans of her own station in life. The others knew well enough what caused her hesitation, but Uncle Tancredi, after his experience of the morning, had delicacy enough to say no word save reiterated assurances that she would be most welcome if she would go with them. Lucia whispered in her ear, “He won’t come now. Perhaps he can’t. He is obliged to go with the soldiers. You had better come with us !”

Then Ninetta gulped down her disappointment, and tried to console herself with the prospect of a dinner; and they all walked off together, Nanni and little Clelia, Carlo and the superb Lucia, duly paired, and Uncle Tancredi and Ninetta—thus again forced into a *tête-à-tête*.

## CHAPTER IX.

THE little *festa* at the *osteria* behind the convent of St. Gregory, on the hill just beyond the Coliseum, was a great success. Four of the party were enjoying some of the choicest of those halcyon hours of which life has so few to offer, and presents no second course of them. Uncle Tancredi became expansive under the influence of the good Velletri wine, and even poor little Ninetta, feeding herself with golden dreams of the future, permitted herself to enjoy the good things of the present moment.

They had finished their dinner, and the men had lighted their cigars, while the girls pretended to take whiffs from them, going off into paroxysms of coughing and laughter, when who should make his appearance, quietly sauntering out of the *osteria*, but Mr. Jenkins, the American sculptor, otherwise Signor Chianquinsi.

“Well, it is odd enough that we should meet a second time on such a day as this, and in such a place,” said he, coming up to the table at which our friends were sitting; “I take it as a good omen that we shall hit it off together to-morrow morning, friend Carena.”

“I desire nothing better, Signore,” said Carlo, who had at first been a little bit inclined to fall back into his suspicions again at this second appearance of his Lucia’s patron. He was reassured, however, by the absolute frankness and absence of the smallest embarrassment on the part of Lucia. “But it remains to be seen,” he added, “whether I shall be fortunate enough to suit your excellency.”

“Well, I think you will. Was it not you who blocked out Signor Carelli’s Psyche? I saw Carelli just after I parted from you this morning; and I should like to put my work into the hands of the man who did that piece of work. Don’t you think that we might as well talk it over at once? We don’t lose time over a bargain in my country.”

“With all my heart,” said Carena, “but we are the guests here of Signor Tancredi,” he added, with a little embarrassment, and inclining his head in the direction of the *buttero*.

“We shall be delighted if your worship will take a seat with us. The wine is not bad, and my niece here tells me that you have been very kind to her,” said Tancredi, with the ready courtesy of a Roman peasant.

“Thank you, Signore Buttero,” said Jenkins, knowing well that the recognition of his host’s position in life would be felt to be complimentary. “You have chosen a delightful place for your *merenda*, and I shall be most happy to be allowed to share it with you.”

Then, after a little talk, in the course of which terms between him and Carlo were arranged to the entire satisfaction of both parties, the talk became general; and Jenkins showed his perfect knowledge of Roman people and their ways by joining in the bantering which was going on upon the subject of the mutual relationship of the two young couples, in a manner which effectually cured Carlo of all tendency to jealousy. The American did not, however, so readily understand what the position of Ninetta was as regarded the others of the group. Had so extremely pretty a girl as he perceived her to be no lover, then? A few indirect questions brought out all the truth, somewhat to poor Ninetta’s confusion, yet somewhat to her

triumph also. At last the magnificent name of Hector de Rampont was elicited also; and thereupon Carlo Carena perceived that a singular and sudden look of gravity and displeasure came over the face of his future patron and master, Signor Chianquinsi. None of the others observed it, being less gifted with eye and mind sight than the young sculptor's workman.

The rest of the afternoon, however, passed in pleasant gossip enough, so that by the time the *buttero* signified that the moment had come when he and his must set out on their return to their distant home, at the foot of the Alban Hills, Signor Chianquinsi, as they all called him, had become well acquainted with each member of the party.

Now it was a long walk from the *osteria* where they had been dining to Lucia's home in the Trastevere; and she and Carlo had looked forward to the pleasure of the *tête-à-tête* to which it would give occasion. But Signor Chianquinsi did not seem inclined to quit them. Civility forbade their telling him that they had rather walk home by themselves: and so they strolled away in the direction of the Coliseum together. Once again Carlo felt a temptation

to give way to jealousy rising in his mind. But the American soon set it at rest, by indicating very clearly that it was his companionship, and not that of Lucia that he wanted.

He began by expressing his hope that Carlo would remain with him, and spoke of the excellence of the work he had done for Signor Carelli. Then going on to talk in a friendly manner of the young man's prospects and interests, he asked him when he and Lucia were to be made one, and said that he hoped the arrangement which he had just concluded with him might seem to him to justify their marriage at an early day.

"Ah! *mio buono signore*," said Carlo, "if that were all, Lucia and I would have made up our minds to face the world together long since. But how can we be married without her father's consent, and how can we hope to get that? Signor Savelli," he added, looking back over his shoulder to see that Lucia, who had rather lackadaisically fallen a little to the rear while the two men had been talking, was out of hearing, and speaking with a bitter irony—"Signor Savelli, it seems, has other views for his daughter."

"But if I have my eyes in my head to see,



there is not much chance of the Signorina Lucia changing her present views. What objection can her father make?"

Then Carlo, again assuring himself that Lucia could not overhear him, explained to him in half a dozen words the real nature and cause of that noble Roman's objection to give his daughter to an honest workman, and of his "views" respecting her, to the unmitigated disgust and indignation of the American. And so warm was his expression of it, that Carlo was led on to justify what he had said by recounting one or two cases in which to all appearance his own intervention had succeeded in saving the poor girl from finding herself in positions of very painful difficulty and danger.

"Aha! oh, that was it, was it? Matters begin to look a little more promising. I think—I begin to think that we shall find the means of bringing this excellent father to reason."

"I don't understand what your worship means?" said Carlo, who was quite mystified by Signor Chianquinsi's incomprehensible utterances.

"Well, what I mean is this. I am inclined to think that a little word from the Vicar-General might have great persuasive power

with Signor Savelli. And I think that a knowledge of such facts as you have been telling me would induce the Vicar-General to speak that little word. That's all."

"The Vicar-General! Ay, like enough, if I were some great gentleman, or only so much as had a *canonico* for my brother or uncle. But how is a poor artist to get speech with the Vicar-General?"

"Well, I think I can promise to manage that part of the matter for you," said Jenkins, speaking in a slow and quiet tone of voice. "You put down a clear statement of the story you told me just now, on paper, and give it to me; and, if I am not mistaken, I think we shall find Signor Alessandro Savelli very shortly disposed to hear reason."

Carlo was so profuse in the expressions of his gratitude and delight, that Lucia, who had been lagging behind not in the very best humour with her friend Signor Chianquinsi, perceived that something of interest had passed between the two men, and stepped up, looking from the face of one to the other.

"What is it, Carlo?" she said; "what has Signor Chianquinsi been saying that has pleased you so much?"

Carlo felt some difficulty in answering her, and looked towards the American.

"I have been telling my friend Carlo, that if he could only manage to get the consent of a certain young lady, I think I could manage to get the consent of the young lady's father to their being married as soon as they like."

"What young lady! Carlo don't want to be married to any young lady. What does it mean? Why don't you speak, Carlo? Why don't you tell him?" said simple-minded, straightforward Lucia, with twitching mouth and flashing eyes, that seemed on the point of bursting into tears.

"I thought he wanted to marry you," said Jenkins very quietly.

"What does it all mean? I am not a young lady! Do speak to me, Carlo," said the poor girl, almost sobbing.

"Why, Lucia, you know I have no thought but of you. When Signor Chianquinsi says a young lady, he means you. There is no other young lady or young woman of any sort in question."

"Then what does Signor Chianquinsi mean by your getting the consent of a young lady to marry you?" said Lucia, now palpably sobbing.

"What I mean is this," said that gentleman, with his usual quiet manner: "if you, Lucia Savelli, are ready to make my friend Carlo here a happy man, I think I can promise that your father will give his consent to your marriage. Is that clear enough?"

"*Madonna mia, sarà vero?* Can it be true? How is it possible? You know my father, then, Signore? What a wonderful man! Did not I say, Carlo, that these Inglesi could do things that our people can't do; can do, in short, anything they choose to do? But it can't be true!"

"It *can* be true, and I think it will be true, Signorina Lucia, if you will say the word. Are you willing to marry Carlo as soon as you have your father's permission to do so? That's all about it," returned Jenkins with a phlegmatic manner, or the assumption of it, which contrasted amusingly with the mobile, nervous agitation of the Roman girl.

"Willing, *Dio mio!* Carlo knows whether I am willing. Oh, if it should only be true!"

"My own darling Lucia! *Anima mia.* Let us thank our kind friend, the best friend we ever had," said Carlo, taking the girl's willing hand.

"Thank him! how can we ever thank him

enough? It is too wonderful. Do you believe it, Carlo? Do you think he can make father consent? Is it possible?"

"Certainly, I think—I hope so. Signor Chianquinsi has reason to think that he will succeed in doing so. But, indeed, indeed, sir," said Carlo, with tears in his eyes and tears in his voice, "Lucia says truly that we can never thank you enough. All our happiness, the happiness of our lives, will be due to you."

"Well, I hope it may turn out so. You and Lucia wish to be married. I think I can find the means of inducing your father to give his consent. The rest is for your own consideration. But when I joined you and the Signorina Lucia just now in your walk home from the *osteria*, I had it in my mind to speak to you about another matter. Otherwise I should have known better than to have spoiled your walk with your sweetheart."

"O, Signore, can you think——" said Carlo, blushing like a girl.

"To be sure. Do you take me for a fool or a brute? But now, look here, friend Carlo. That pretty girl whom the Signorina Lucia had with her this morning, and again at the *osteria*—her friend—what is her name?"

“What is la Ninetta’s real name, Lucia?” asked Carlo.

“Assunta degl’ Innocenti; they call her Ninetta for short,” said Lucia.

“Poor child!” said the American. “I heard what you were all saying there under the *pergola*, and—I am afraid that she will get into trouble. Yes, I am; and that is what I wanted to speak to you about.”

“What is it, Signore? I believe her to be a very good girl. Has she done anything wrong? I am sure if I or Lucia can help her in any way we shall be most ready to do so. But——”

“This lover of hers. It so happens that I know all about him very well. Done wrong? Poor silly little thing! What she has done wrong is to give her silly little heart to as big a rascal as is within the walls of Rome, and that is saying a great deal.”

“A French officer, Mossoo Hector de Rampont,” said Carlo.

“He has promised to make Ninetta a contessa,” said Lucia. “For my part, I had rather——”

“Have an honest workman than a scoundrelly gentleman, or one who calls himself such. I



should think so, indeed. But as for making her a countess, he is about as likely to make me Pope. Bah! he has no thought of marrying her, poor little fool!"

"*Madonna mia!*" ejaculated Lucia, "and she so fond of him, and so proud of being his wife!"

"His wife—pshaw! You must make her understand that he means nothing of the sort; that he would not even keep her as his mistress long. I know all about him, and about a poor girl whom he has just now abandoned, after enticing her away from her home. He is a regular bad lot."

"It will be no use telling her so," said Carlo, "she will never believe it. She would say that we were against him because he is one of the French officers."

"And reason enough too," cried Lucia, with her eyes flashing: "I have no patience with a Roman girl who——"

"That is all very well, Signorina Lucia," said Jenkins quietly; "but girls when they fall in love are not always able to take an entirely sound and unprejudiced view of men and things. And now the question is how to save your friend from this rascal, who has persuaded her to listen to him."

“Your worship says well. Yes, that is the question,” said Carlo, “and how can we persuade her to listen to reason?”

“Well, that is the difficulty,” said the American. “I say,” he added, after thinking for a minute or two, “do you know whether la Ninetta can read?”

“Yes,” said Lucia, “I know she can. Her business leaves her nothing to do almost all the summer, and last summer with a little help from an old priest, who lives in the same house, she learned to read very well, even written letters. And I know she has had letters from her French lover, because she has shown them to me, and once she read one to me—a beautiful letter it was. To think that it could be written by such a one as your worship says this man is!”

“Well then, I’ll tell you what we will do. I will show her some other beautiful letters written by this beautiful gentleman; she will see that they are signed by him, and she will see that the hand-writing is the same. Or perhaps it will be better that you should show them to her, Signorina Lucia. I will go to the unfortunate girl he has deceived and abandoned; and I make no doubt that I shall be able to get

some of these precious letters into my hands. You come to the studio to-morrow morning, and bring her with you. You had better not tell her anything about the object of your coming. You can get her to walk with you—she has nothing to do in this weather. Then tell her that you have to make an appointment with me, and let her wait a few minutes in the workshop. My friend Carlo will be there, you know; and you come into the inner room to me.”

“And your worship”—(*vossignoria* was the word used, which has been so translated in these pages, for want of a better equivalent; )—“your worship won’t forget the other little matter about Lucia’s father?” said Carlo, looking somewhat wistfully into the American sculptor’s face.

“Little matter!” echoed Jenkins; “why that is the great matter of all. Never fear. I make no doubt of putting all that to rights. The person who will whisper a word in the ear of the Cardinal-Governor is one not likely to be disregarded. I wish we were only as sure of setting this poor pretty fool of a Ninetta free of her rascally Frenchman. And now my friends *à rivederci*. You will come to the studio at six to-morrow morning, Carlo, and we’ll get to work

at once. And you, Signorina, will come as soon as you can bring la Ninetta with you. And perhaps we will have a sitting for the 'America' afterwards."

And so the trio parted.

## CHAPTER X.

THE next morning after that festival of the *Corpus Domini* that was so memorable a one to most of the little party who have been introduced to the reader, Mr. Jenkins, *alias* Signor Chianquinsi, was up and at his studio before Carlo had reached it. The first hours after sunrise, as the last before his setting, are the golden hours of an Italian summer day, and the American sculptor was a sufficiently "old Roman" to have learned to profit by and enjoy them. He had spoken a few words to the workman whose duty it was to be there before him and to open the studio, and was sitting on an old sofa placed against the wall under the northern window, immediately in front of which was the clay on which Signor Jenkins was at that time employed. He had not, however, yet lifted from it the wet cloths, which covered the

clay, the careful removal of which was always the sculptor's first care on arriving at his studio ; but was engaged in arranging some letters, spread out on the sofa by his side, and reading certain passages of them here and there, which he was marking with a pencil.

Presently there was a knock at the door of the inner studio, in which the sculptor was sitting, and in answer to his *avanti* (forwards), a head was advanced between the half-open door and the doorpost, and a "permesso?" uttered in Carlo's robust tenor voice.

"Come in, friend Carlo. You've brought the Signorina Lucia with you, I hope. Ay, there she is. Come in, both of you. You see I have not forgotten what I promised. As for your own affair, Signorina Lucia"—(the American was very punctilious with his "Signorina;" an Italian would have called the girl by some abbreviated nickname; so, probably, Jenkins might have done, had she been other than so superbly beautiful)—"as to your affair, you may consider that as good as settled. It will be so in the course of to-day. When you ask your father's permission to marry our friend here, you will find that the request will be very graciously received, and the paternal permission



and blessing granted. But now as to this business of that poor unhappy little Ninetta. I have got the loan of the letters—not without some difficulty, I can tell you—and here they are. I want you, you know, to shew them to her.”

“But I can read but very little, *Signore mio*; that is, as yet,” said Lucia, with a glance at Carlo, as she put in the last qualifying clause—“and how shall I know?”

“I have thought of all that,” said Mr. Jenkins. “Look here, I have marked the passages you must point out to her with a red pencil. She will read them; she will read them to you, no doubt; and then you will understand it all, and will speak to her your own feeling upon the matter; and I am sure that I could say nothing better than you will say. And it will come better from you.”

“I will try to persuade her all I can, *Signore*; that you may be sure of,” returned Lucia; “but does not your worship think that it would be best for you to speak to her yourself too. She will think so much more of what you say.”

“Well, I will try my hand. But I think you had better begin it. Now, look here. In this letter he makes her predecessor exactly

the same promises that he has made to Ninetta. *She* is to be his wife, and Countess de Rampont. *She* is to go and be mistress of his ancestral castle, and all the rest of it. Then come all the same excuses for not marrying her immediately; the same difficulties in the way, the same putting off the happy day until after the death of an uncle, who is in fact dying, and whose death he expects to hear of by every post. I wonder to how many other girls he has told the same lies. He makes no variation at all—repeats it all as if it were a printed form. Well, then the unfortunate girl believes it all, and suffers herself to be persuaded by him, gives herself up to him. Then for a little while—a very little while—the letters contain but a few words each, mere appointments for meeting. But let her read them and mark the tone of them. No more of the pretty talk that cheated the poor little fool, and cozened her heart out of her. Mere orders to meet him. Then very, very soon the gentleman gets tired of his new conquest; here are letters putting off meetings, not a word of explanation or apology. Till at last we come to the shameful, brutal end of the story, in this letter, telling his victim that he wants nothing more of her—that circumstances

have changed in a manner that must put an end to anything further between them; it is of no use for her to come to the lodgings he used to occupy, for he is on the point of leaving them, and for her own sake she had better not make any attempt to find him out. Ah!" concluded Signor Chianquinsi, drawing a very long breath through his teeth, "I think I must allow myself the luxury of giving that fellow a beating somehow or other, one of these days. The danger would be that one would murder the brute from the impossibility of making up one's mind to leave off. Well, what do you say to such a gentleman as that, and his love, and his letters, eh, Signorina Lucia?"

"*Che vuole chi si dica!* What would you that one should say?" replied Lucia, using the common popular form of stating a nonplus. "No doubt, when la Ninetta shall have been made to understand that those letters were written by her *damo* to another girl, she will have no more to say to him."

"I should think so, indeed. Let us hope so," said the sculptor.

"If she should do otherwise," put in Carlo, "she would not be worthy of any further thought from your worship; and I am sure

I should not wish a wife of mine to call her her friend."

"You will not find that she will do so," said Jenkins, with a sententious nod of the head.

So Lucia went off to meet poor little Ninetta, who was near at hand, little guessing the grief and desperate mortification that awaited her, poor child !

Very soon the two girls came back together, Ninetta chatting gayly, and evidently mystified by her companion's reticent and embarrassed air.

Carlo opened the door of the studio to them, and then, having briefly saluted Ninetta, suddenly withdrew into the inner studio, where Mr. Jenkins was, leaving the two girls alone in the outer room.

The sculptor asked him by a silent motion of the head and eyes, whether Ninetta were come, and he answered in the same manner by a glance at the door. They continued in silence, and in a very few minutes began to hear the ordinarily silver voice of Ninetta rising to tones of shrill expostulation and anger. Then, after another pause of silence, there was a sound of sobbing and wailing, in which both girls seemed to be joining ; and then, after a while, the

murmuring of a long conversation sufficiently protracted to try the patience of the sculptor and his workman, who were awaiting the issue. At last Jenkins opened the door, and went and sat himself on the old sofa by the side of the still silently weeping Ninetta. He took her hand in his, and set about the work of consoling her as best he knew how.

It was not an easy task ; for many feelings, all of them deeply wounded and mortified, were seething and struggling together in the poor girl's breast. There was disappointed love, though that probably was not the deepest wound ; there was outraged pride ; there was humiliation in the eyes of her friends and companions ; there was the destruction of high hopes. It was very bitter. And Signor Chianquinsi had an arduous task. But he persevered with it, persevered with it so long, that Lucia and Carlo, finding themselves apparently *de trop*, stole off into the other room, minded to attend to their own affairs.

I do not think that Signor Chianquinsi altogether completed the work of consolation upon that occasion. But that he was fully successful before he left off may be inferred from the fact that la Ninetta now calls herself

la Signora Chianquinsi, never having been able to learn any other mode of pronouncing her husband's name; though she has learned many things and is still an exceedingly popular and admired personage in the artist world of Rome, and an acknowledged ornament of the peculiar artistic society of the Eternal City.



GIULIA VARANI; OR, ST. PETER'S  
DAY AT BELLUNO.



## GIULIA VARANI; OR, ST. PETER'S DAY AT BELLUNO.

It was barely four o'clock in the morning; but the inmates of a certain house in the Borgo Garibaldi at Belluno were already astir; for it was the morning of a great "festa," the 29th of June, and nothing less than the festival of St. Peter himself. A great day in primitive little Belluno! For, though the Italians in general are beginning to think much less of such things than they did some ten or twenty years ago, the mountaineers of the slopes and valleys on the southern side of the Alpine wall are a pious and primitive race; and old habits, old feelings, old ideas, and old reverence still linger among them.

The inmates of the house in question were on

the first-floor, and in garrets above it : Stefano Barilli, well-to-do master mason and owner of a quarry ; his wife Assunta ; their three children, aged ten, eleven, and thirteen ; Giulia Varani, Assunta's unmarried sister ; and a maid-servant. The ground-floor of the building was occupied as the workshop of the mason. The house, it will be seen, was a small one, consisting only of ground-floor, first-floor, and garrets under the roof. But it was a solid well-built tenement, mainly constructed of stone ; and it was large enough to house the stone-mason's family in all comfort and without any undue crowding.

The inmates were already astir, I have said ; but I should have said *some* of them. Master Stefano himself was still snoring. Not that Stefano Barilli was ordinarily a lazy fellow or a bad workman. Far from it. But that 29th of June was a great "festa." And that, you see, was friend Stefano's idea of "looking like the time." He got up at four in the morning on work-days. What was a "festa" for, if he was to do the same thing then as every other day ? And then, as for the morning mass at the cathedral—well, Master Stefano was a very good Catholic, and thought morning mass an excellent thing—for the women. But, like the

majority of his countrymen, he was rather apt to consider such religious observances to belong to the female department of life. So Assunta, like a good wife as she was, had silently stolen away from her bed, leaving her husband to enjoy his extra hours of rest, and had gone to complete her "festa" toilette in the chamber of her sister Giulia, who was busily engaged in the same operation. The children, too, who occupied three beds in a room contiguous to that of their parents, had not been awakened. For Assunta was an indulgent mother. They were sleeping so sweetly, the poor little darlings; and it would be time enough to get them up when she and Giulia returned from mass. The servant-girl was up and dressed, and ready to go out to market to make the daily "spese;" but had been told by Assunta to remain in the house till her return from the cathedral, in case the children should wake.

The two sisters were, as has been said, busy with their toilette, and with sisterly assistance of each other; but half a glance would have sufficed to show that they were busy with a difference. Both were still young women; for though Assunta was the mother of a girl of thirteen, she was only just thirty years

old; and Giulia was seven years her junior. Both had considerable pretensions to good looks. Giulia, indeed, was—or, young as she was, perhaps it would be more correct to say, had been—one of the leading beauties of Belluno. And Assunta, though never as handsome as her sister, was still comely, and had evidently been a very pretty woman in her day. In Assunta's case, the "had been" was in due course of nature, alas. For if beauty is ever a fleeting flower, it fleets and fades with terribly extra swiftness among the Southern races, and especially so among the dwellers in the mountain districts. So, though both sisters were busy, they were busy with a difference.

Giulia was very evidently putting her whole heart into the task before her. But Assunta, though seconding by assistance and advice her sister's operations, seemed to be scarcely contented in doing so; and would now and then pause to look at Giulia's progress with a half-suppressed sigh, and an almost imperceptible shake of the head. It was not that the sister, the morning radiance of whose beauty had faded, had any the faintest feeling of jealousy of the younger woman. It was not that. Though Giulia was evidently bent



on dressing herself with care, it was at least equally evident that the task brought little of happiness or contentment with it. And it would have been easy to guess that in the same cause which was taking all the pleasantness out of what should be a labour of love to a young girl of three and twenty, was to be found the explanation of poor Giulia's so prematurely faded beauty. But to make this explanation duly intelligible, it is necessary to tell, as briefly as may be, a few of the facts of her short previous history.

At the bottom of what we may call the High Street of Belluno, near the spot where the little city is entered from the north by a bridge over the river Piave, there is a well-frequented inn called the Longarone Inn. Longarone is a small town about twelve miles from Belluno, situated also on the Piave, higher up in its course. The Piave is a somewhat noisy, ill-conducted, and brawling, but, on the whole, a hard-working, little river. It is too irregular and wild in its habits to permit of navigation of any sort being entrusted to it; but it turns more saw-mills in the course of its career than most streams, and in this manner earns a good deal of money. Longarone is one of the centres

of the business arising from this industry; and the intercourse between that little town and Belluno, the capital of the province, is accordingly considerable; and the Longarone Inn, just over the bridge at Belluno, was consequently a good and thriving property; and the owner and landlord of it, Giuseppi Morini, was well known to be a warm man. But he was not a very popular man at Belluno. In the first place, he was a widower; and there had been disagreeable stories connected with the death of his wife. To say the least of it, Giuseppi Morini was known to have been a bad and unkind husband. In the second place, he was equally well known to be no true liberal. He was a "codino," a regretter of the former order of things in Church and State; and was supposed to be a creature, and perhaps a spy, of the bishop, who was the ground landlord of the house leased to him as an inn. Now, Belluno is very patriotic, very liberal, and the bishop, said to have been specially sent there by Rome, because the Bellunesi needed a strong-handed prelate over them in Church matters, was not a whit more popular in the diocese than the landlord of the Longarone Inn. Into the bargain, Giuseppi Morini was a hard, ill-tempered, violent, and disagreeable man.

Now, this unpleasant but well-to-do innkeeper had a son, who apparently had not been able to get on with his father any better than the rest of the world of Belluno. For young Carlo Morini had, notwithstanding the vehement opposition of his father, left his home when Garibaldi was collecting volunteers to fight against the Austrians in the Tyrol, and had donned the red shirt. Small as were the strategical results of that campaign in the Tyrol, the Garibaldians reaped a rich harvest of glory; and young Morini was understood to have merited and received for his conduct at the attack of a certain impregnable Austrian fort the special and personal commendations of the leader who was the idol of all Italy. Thus he, for his share, returned to his native mountain city a hero in the eyes of his fellow citizens, and specially, inasmuch as he was as good-looking a young fellow as ever wore the red shirt, of his fellow citizenesses; of all the town, indeed, with the few "codino" exceptions, which would have signified nothing at all had not one of the exceptions been the young Garibaldian's own father. Giuseppi Morini simply shut his door in his son's face, and told him to carry his red shirt elsewhere, for that none who

had worn that livery should ever darken *his* doors. Now, as poor Carlo Morini had little else save his red shirt to carry anywhere else, this was a pity; the more so, as it did not seem at all clear how the young Garibaldian, who, as the son of a rich man, had never been brought up to any bread-winning pursuit, was to get his living. Fortunately, he had an uncle in the town, a brother of his mother, who had long since ceased to have any communication with Giuseppi Morini, his brother-in-law; and this uncle gave him a home for the nonce. Pietro Porta—that was the uncle's name—held some small employment under the Municipality; and, though an old bachelor, was much too poor a man to be able to support his nephew in idleness, even if Carlo would have consented to be so supported. But the young man had no wish or intention of the sort. He accepted the shelter of his uncle's home only till he should be able to look about him, and find some way of earning his own bread. He did look about, and after some little time did obtain a position as half-foreman, half-overlooker in a saw-mill at Perarolo, a little town on the Piave, about seven miles above Longarone. But while looking about he had among other places looked into Giulia Varani's

dark hazel eyes, and incontinently fallen desperately in love with her. Of course, many pretty tales might be told of their meetings and flirtings, and vows and quarrels; but I promised to make the story as short a one as I possibly could, and therefore merely state the facts of the case in the nakedest manner. Giulia, of course, fell just as much in love with Carlo as Carlo did with her. It was not likely that she should abstain from doing so. Nevertheless, the course of true love did not run any smoother with them than it is said to be generally in the habit of running.

In short, of all the things that he could have looked on, in the whole valley of the Piave, the very worst that his eyes could have fallen on was the pretty face and trim figure of beautiful Giulia Varani. And for Giulia herself, it would have been well for her—and, indeed, for himself too—if an Austrian bullet had cut short Carlo's career under that same Tyrolean fortress.

The case was a hopeless one from the first. Even if Carlo, instead of quarrelling irremediably with his cross-grained father, had been safe to inherit the old man's money and the inn, Stefano Barilli would have been exceedingly unwilling that his family should have become

closely united to that of one so ill-conditioned and so ill looked on as the innkeeper. Such matters are thought much of in small and primitive communities, such as that in which these two men lived. Carlo came, as the highly respectable and respected stonemason urged, of a bad stock. And Master Stefano, as provincial folk, who have lived all their lives in a small town, knowing everybody in it and nobody out of it, are apt to be, was very strong in his sentiments in the matter of "stocks." But as the case stood—why, the young man was a beggar, and would be lucky if he could find the means of putting an honest crust into his own mouth, let alone those of a wife and family. An ex-Garibaldian too! Yes, Liberty, Glory, Patriotism! Very fine things, no doubt. He himself, Master Stefano, hoped, and dared to say, he was as good a patriot as any in Belluno. And he much admired the brave young fellows who had gone a-soldiering with Garibaldi. But—as for marrying, he thought that glory and wives did not go well together. Give him an honest hardworking citizen for a brother-in-law. And then, for a fellow without a soldo in the world, or the prospect of having one as far as he could see, to think of making up to Giulia



Varani! to *his* sister-in-law!—not if *he* knew it. Master Stefano thought he knew the world rather better than that came to.

Thus Master Stefano had finally and firmly settled in his own mind that there was nothing, could be nothing, and never should be anything, between Carlo Morini and his sister-in-law Giulia. And difficult as it was at all times to get anything into Master Stefano's head, it was ten times more difficult to get it out again when once it had got in. And as for Assunta, feeling, as a good wife should, that nobody on earth could be so wise, so prudent, and so generally right as her husband, she whole-heartedly followed his lead and did her utmost to second his opposition to Carlo's love-making. Now, legally the stonemason and his wife had not the smallest right to control Giulia's actions in this matter. But those know little of Italian social life who imagine that a good and decent girl in Giulia's position could or would venture to act in such a matter in the teeth of the wishes and commands of an elder brother-in-law and sister who had for the last fourteen years stood to her in the place of parents. Poor Giulia never dreamed of any such disreputable rebellion. Nor, indeed, did it occur to Carlo to urge her to take such a

desperate step. It was too much out of the ordinary course of things, and too certain to be visited with the highest censure and indignation on the part of every one of those who made up the world they lived in.

Thus when, some six years or so before that beautiful June morning, Carlo Morini had gone off to his work at Perarolo, after more than one stolen interview and tender adieu, and the exchange of many vows between him and Giulia, Stefano and Assunta had flattered themselves that there was an end of the matter, and that so pretty a girl as Giulia would be assuredly persuaded to listen to some more desirable lover long before Carlo could come back again, if, indeed, he should ever wish to remind her of her promises. But the Piave, which is, as has already been mentioned, a wild and reckless, and occasionally very ill-behaved river, had in the spring preceding the June of which I have been speaking, indulged itself in a regular outbreak and spree—with the result of destroying several mills, and among them that in which Carlo Morini worked, in Perarolo; and the consequence of this was that that young man had been spending the last two months in his uncle's house in Belluno. But the mill had by

the last week in June been got once more into working order, and Carlo found himself under the necessity of returning to his work at Perarolo. The great "festa" of St. Peter's Day was to be his last in Belluno, and he was to start on his return to Perarolo on the morrow.

And now, perhaps, the judicious reader will be able to understand—and I hope will not think that I have been too long in explaining—why it was that on that 29th of June, before starting for the early five-o'clock mass at the cathedral, Giulia Varani, though doing her best to make the most of the resources of her wardrobe, hung her pretty head and sighed sadly from time to time, as she proceeded with her task; why it was that the full contour of the once peach-like cheek had lost its bloom, its colour, and its roundness; and why the decking of herself in her best had rather the air of preparing a victim for the sacrifice than adorning a fancy-free maiden for a festal morning.

Had the question been put to her, she would have said, and truly said, that she could not tell why or with what motive she was adorning herself. She had promised, poor girl, to manage so as to give her lover one more

secret meeting. But it was to be the last—was understood and admitted on both sides to be so. There was no hope for them. What hope could there be? Carlo must leave Belluno or starve. Whatever heartbreak the separation might bring with it, separate they must. What was the use or object of this last meeting? None who have ever loved in vain will ask the question. No good could come of it assuredly. It was certain that to both Carlo and Giulia it would but be the occasion of additional misery—of a climax of agony. And yet both would have deemed themselves to be stricken by Fate with a cruel additional misfortune had circumstances occurred to make that meeting impossible.

At last, after many protestations from Assunta that they would be late at the mass, Giulia declared herself to be ready, and the two women issued forth from the house in the Borgo Garibaldi, and, carefully shutting the door of it behind them, turned towards the centre of the little city on their way to the cathedral.

The inhabitants of mountain districts, however uncultured, have very generally a more awakened sense of the beauties of the scenes

amid which they live than denizens of the plains. But it would have been difficult for any human being with eyes to see, not to feel admiration for the scene which lay before the two sisters as they emerged from the long and somewhat narrow street called the Borgo Garibaldi on to the chief piazza of the city. Very few towns of any country in Europe are situated in a position of so much beauty as Belluno, and none can surpass it in this respect. The stream of the Piave, which during the whole of its previous course has been running through a narrow rock-bound ravine, when it nears Belluno changes its character. No longer a brawling torrent, it pursues a somewhat winding way through a wide and fertile vale, over the whole expanse of which the city looks from its seat upon one of the lowest slopes of the mighty range of dolomite peaks that shut in the happy valley on either side. All below is smiling verdure, and fields, and herds, basking in a light which of itself makes all it shines on beautiful. All around and above stand the giant warders, the inaccessible peaks, which with their wonderful jagged outline seem to shut out all the world beyond. It is a scene of

truly wondrous beauty; and at that hour of the midsummer morning, as the first rays of the sun came peeping slantingly across the snow-topped barrier, projecting a rose-coloured bloom on the snow-fields and pale grey crags, and gilding all they fell on in the valley, the heart must have been dull indeed that did not feel the exquisite loveliness of all that met the eye.

The two women paused for a moment, as they crossed the piazza, to gaze on the loveliness spread out beneath their eyes; but the matin bell of the cathedral, booming its summons through the still air of a morning that seemed to promise a glorious but blazing day, forbade them to linger longer.

"They are cutting a sight of grain down the valley," said Assunta. "Well, thanks to St. Peter and the Blessed Virgin, there could not be finer weather for it. Come along, Giulia!"

And they crossed the piazza, and were passing in front of that fine old specimen of Venetian architecture, which, while now serving the Province for the official residence of its Prefect, recalls the days when Venice was the lord of all these valleys and mountains, when Giulia said suddenly—



“Go on, Assunta; I will follow you in half a minute; but I must remind old Niccolò the *carbonaio* to send us a basket of charcoal this morning, or Stefano will be like to find no dinner cooked at noon. And if I don't catch the old man now, he will be out on his rounds before we come out of church.”

And without giving her sister time to utter a word of objection or remonstrance, Giulia turned suddenly round on her heel and disappeared round the corner of the small narrow lane which runs down by the side of the old Venetian palace, the elaborately carved and cunningly fitted stones of which, as perfect then as they had been left by the mason's hand four hundred years ago, were so soon to be rudely shaken from their places!

Now it was true that this care for the supply of the charcoal necessary for the preparation for the festa dinner fell within Giulia's recognized department in the mason's household. And it was also true that old Niccolò the *carbonaio* lived down that lane, and undeniable that later in the day it might be hard to catch him. But then it was equally true, as Assunta did not fail to remember at that moment, that Pietro Porta, Carlo Morini's uncle, also dwelt in that same

narrow and little-frequented thoroughfare. And the remembrance caused Assunta to shake her head and look doubtfully after her sister as she disappeared round the corner. For a minute she stood undecided whether it would not be better to follow her. And, as is so frequently the case when decisions which seem to hang upon the turning of a hair are afterwards seen to be pregnant with the most momentous consequences, Assunta would have afterwards been quite unable to tell what the considerations were that, turning the wavering balance to one side rather than the other, decided her to continue her way to the cathedral, and not to interfere with her sister's movements. Such, however, was the course she took, and in another couple of minutes she entered the great western door of the church and joined the congregation—a larger one than usual on the festal morning—which was gathered to hear mass in front *not of the high altar*, but of one of those which terminate the lateral aisles of the building.

Giulia, as soon as ever she was sure that the corner of the Palazzo hid her from her sister's sight, sped down the lane with the fleetness and the lightness of a lapwing, passed the shop of Niccolò the *carbonaio* without a thought of the

cooking at home, and paused not till she stood breathless in a little dark entry at the further end of the lane, where, in about a dozen of seconds, she was joined by a young man who came bounding down a stair at the further end of the passage.

“My own darling!” said Carlo, after *the usual preliminaries*, as the chroniclers of official meetings have it, “My own sweet Giulia! I knew you would come; you would not let me go without one word of farewell; and there was no other way but this!”

“Of course I came! And of course you knew that I should come. I *could* not—no, I *could* not part for ever without telling you, Carlo—without telling you——”

The poor little swelling heart could contain itself no further; and, dropping her head on his bosom, Giulia broke down in a convulsion of sobs.

“Anima mia!” said Carlo, pressing her head against his heart, “why did we ever meet? Why did I ever see you or speak to you, for this misery to come upon us!”

“Don’t say that, Carlo,” sobbed Giulia; “then I should never have loved anybody, and—and——”

Here a fresh outburst of sobbing stifled her utterance.

“My own darling! It is too hard, too cruel!” said Carlo, bitterly distressed, but with a *banalité* that marked the inferiority of the mannish nature to that of the girl, who, even in the extremity of her hopeless sorrow, preferred to have and to have had the love that made her sorrow, rather than never to have known the object of it.

“I shall love you always, Carlo—always to the last day of my life. I shall never, never care about anybody else. And now we must part for the last time—now—now! For I *must* go. Assunta is waiting for me. I told her I should be gone only a minute.”

“One more minute, my own Giulia. I have said nothing to you. And I had so much to say. I may write to you?”

She shook her head.

“It would be of no use. I should never be allowed to get your letters. No, we shall never see each other again, and I shall never hear your voice again.”

“Oh, Giulia, Giulia! Surely things must change! If we can but have patience to wait!”

“Patience! What time would I not wait?”

Have I not waited? But it is no use—no use! You will find some other girl to love you. Yes, you will, of course you will. But I don't think I shall hear or know anything about it, Carlo. They will find that they have given me my death. I shan't live long, Carlo. You will see I shall not have to bear what I am now bearing for long; the blessed Virgin is too good to let me. I know that I shall not be here for long, Carlo. And now, *tesoro mio*, give me one kiss, one last kiss, the last—the last for ever, and let me go!”

“Giulia, you are breaking my heart!” said Carlo as he formed his lips to hers.

“May God and the good Virgin bless you, Carlo, and make you happy! I will try to wish that you may be happy in loving some girl less unfortunate than your poor Giulia. Adieu! Farewell! Farewell for ever! The last must come!”

As she spoke she turned in his arms to leave him. But he still held her pressed to his heart.

“Hear my last words, Giulia, and remember them. I swear by all a man can swear by that I will never love any but you; never forget you; never cease waiting for you; never give up the

hope that the day may come when you will be mine!"

"God bless you, Carlo! Now let me go; I must go."

"You shall go, darling. One more last kiss; one more to remember and to think of when we are far apart."

He still held her to his heart, and the minutes sped—sped on their fateful way.

If that last, last kiss had not been given; if—if—always that terrible "if"—if something, some little little thing had been a hair's breadth different from what *it was*!

At last Giulia escaped from his arms, and sped back through the narrow lane as quickly as her light feet would carry her; turned once at the corner of the Palazzo to look back for an instant, and then, with that death in her heart which comes from entire despair and the utter blankness of the future, hastened to rejoin her sister in the church.

The cathedral clock had struck five a few minutes before she reached the western front of the building and she was within a couple of paces of the sacred threshold, when suddenly, without a note of warning, the solid earth began to rock and reel beneath her feet. Her head



swam, her feet staggered; she instinctively stretched out her arms to save herself from falling.

What was it? Was she stricken with illness? Was she losing her senses? Had the death, which she had wished for and almost invoked a minute or too previously, already overtaken her? Everything seemed swaying giddily around her; a great wind seemed to have arisen with unnatural suddenness; and all the air was filled with dust and haze. The beautiful clearness of the summer morning was gone; and it seemed to Giulia as if all nature were stricken with the crushing sorrow which had killed her own heart.

The great western door of the cathedral yawned open in front of her. Refuge and safety were intimately connected in her mind with the idea of the sacred edifice. Besides, Assunta was within.

With outstretched arms, as seeking to balance herself amid the strange commotion, stumbling and staggering, she rushed forward towards the open door.

If she had torn herself from her lover's arms a minute sooner; if she had been detained by him a minute—half a quarter of a minute—

longer ; if her impulse had been to turn and fly, instead of to go forward into the church—if, if, if—the mind *will* recur, in the imbecility of its blindness, to such vain thinkings of what might have been. What *was*, was that at the moment, the very moment, that Giulia crossed the threshold of the building, the earthquake shook a huge fragment of carved stone from the spot where it had securely rested for so many generations in the topmost pinnacle of the gable-wall above her ; and that which a moment before was a living brain, thinking and embracing both the past and the future in its life, and a living heart, loving, throbbing, despairing, suffering, lay on the pavement a horrible crushed mass of quivering flesh and shattered bones !

Ay, had she gone into the church with her sister, or had she remained but one moment longer with her lover ! For hers was the only life lost in the ruin that that first and most terrible shock of the terrible earthquake which devastated Belluno and its neighbourhood in the year 1873 brought upon the cathedral. Fortunately the congregation, as has been said, had assembled to hear mass at one of the lateral altars of the side aisle. Had they been in front of the high altar, the destruction of life must

have been terrible. For the apse of the church was rent in two places, and huge masses of the roof were hurled on to the altar and on to the pavement in front of it, and forced their way through it into the vaults below. As it was, no life was lost in the church save that of our poor Giulia, who indeed could hardly have been said to have been *in* the church, having met her fate on the very threshold.



THE ATKINSES AT ROME.





# THE ATKINSES AT ROME.

## CHAPTER I.

### A "MEET" IN THE CAMPAGNA.

THE aptitude and the inaptitude of Englishmen to make homes for themselves in strange lands, and to become, as Byron says, "In strange eyes not a stranger," are both remarkable as you regard the matter from different points of view. That the Englishman is a good colonist the history of the world declares with sufficient emphasis and distinctness. That he not only can find a home in strange lands, but can find a pleasure in doing so, the cities of Europe, from St. Petersburg to Palermo, abundantly declare. Yet your Englishman does not readily emancipate himself from the specialties of his English habits. He assimilates himself to the

people among whom he pitches his nomad tent less perhaps than the denizen of any other land. Perfectly ready to leave his island home, and to leave it as far behind him as may be needed, he yet insists upon carrying England about with him wherever he goes. And the degree in which he has succeeded in causing his special needs and tastes to be supplied and catered for on the shores of the Mediterranean, as well as on those of the Baltic, is one of the curious specialties of modern life in Europe. Lord Byron's Fletcher would no longer need to make his master's life a burden to him because there was no porter to be had. And Miss Mariana Starke's \* recommendations to the traveller about to venture across the Channel, to carry with him "a carving-knife and fork, and a block-tin tea-kettle," are out of date; not because he has learned to live without his block-tin tea-kettle, but because he has taught the nations of Europe to provide the article for him. And

\* Perhaps I ought not to assume that readers of the present day have ever heard of Miss Mariana Starke. Her book was *the* guide-book to the Continent in the days before Murray's red books existed; and her volume is a truly curious indication of the changes that have been made in continental life in the course of the last half-century.

to this teaching our Trans-Atlantic cousins have of late years contributed their full share. It is not, I think, that Americans have the same degree of difficulty in adapting themselves to the habits and ways of living of foreign society. They are perhaps more cosmopolitan in this respect than their fathers in the old country. But they invariably find English ways and things so much more consonant to their own likings than those of any other people, that they swell—and in these latter years have more than doubled—the demand for all that was originally provided especially for Englishmen. And as, of course, all such special providings must depend on the extent of the demand, the greatly increased flood of American travellers in Europe has largely contributed to the due supply of all those special little matters that an Englishman likes to find prepared for him.

Foremost among the specialties which illustrate the truth of these remarks is the Roman hunt. A fox-hunt bodily transplanted out of the English shires to the Campagna around Rome! A "view halloo" within hearing of the Catacombs! The mere idea is enough to make each separate saint of all the tens of thousands who lie there, and have lain in peace

for some sixteen hundred years, turn in his narrow rock-hewn bed. Of all the transplantations of bits of English life to foreign soil, this establishment of a fox-hunt at Rome is the most wonderful and the most audacious. Think of listening to the music of the hounds under the shadow of the tower-tomb of Cæcilia Metella! Think of Reynard "stealing away" between the sepulchres which line the Via Appia! Yet it has taken root in the soil to which it has been transplanted, and has become an institution. Many of the Roman *jeunesse dorée* have taken to the sport kindly, and would find a great gap in their winter amusements if the English hunt were no longer in existence. But it would assuredly cease to exist if it were wholly cut off from the parent stock. A continuous supply of English riders, English horses, English dogs, and, above all, English ways and ideas, is needed to cause the exotic plant to flourish. Possibly American patronage might keep up the hunt even if Old England had sunk beneath the sea—for it is at the present day as much supported by Americans as by Englishmen—but it may be safely affirmed that if the Italians were left to manage it by themselves, the institution would not last long.

They are not "to the manner born," though, as I have said, some among them take to it kindly. The Prince Royal is a great supporter of the hunt, and is very constantly present at the meets. And he does not ride badly. Prince Sciarra is also a very regular attendant, and does the thing, as far as it is possible for one of Latin race to do it, in good English style.

But let us suppose, not that Chanticleer has "proclaimed a hunting-morning," in the words of the good old English hunting-song—because the Nimrods of the Eternal City do not dream of turning out till near mid-day—but that the *Italian News* has proclaimed it in its columns, and betake ourselves to mark "the humours" of a meet in the Campagna.

The meet on this occasion shall be at the tomb of Cæcilia Metella—perhaps the prettiest, most characteristic, and most picturesque of all the spots at which the Roman hunt is in the habit of assembling. This celebrated tomb is situated by the side of the Via Appia, about two miles from the gate of St. Sebastian, on the southern side of the city. The Via Appia—"longarum regina viarum," as an old Roman poet calls it—was the great means of communication between Rome and all the south

of Italy and the port of Brundisium, the modern Brindisi. The Via Appia was therefore also the highway leading to all the Roman settlements and colonies in the Levant, as well as to Egypt and to Greece. For the first ten or twelve miles of its course after leaving the city the road is lined by an almost continuous succession of ancient sepulchres, and immediately after passing the Catacombs of St. Sebastian it plunges into the full desolation of the Campagna. The peculiar and unspeakable sadness which is the special characteristic of the Roman Campagna—and also, it may be said, its special charm—has often been remarked. And that portion of the vast and wonderful prairie which the traveller enters on who leaves Rome by the Via Appia bears impressed on it this special characteristic perhaps more strikingly than any other. Certainly, whether considered with reference to the immediate foreground or to the features of the distant view, it is the most beautiful. In front, as he faces south, the wayfarer on the Via Appia has the Alban Hills, culminating in Monte Cavo, and shutting in the plain of the Campagna before his eyes. They are studded with towns and villages, which show like white spots of



light amid the darker colouring of the surrounding woods, or retire into shadow scarcely to be distinguished from them, according as the southern sun touches them with his gilding, or a fleeting cloud shelters them from his eye. But these distant evidences of the presence of human life are too far off to mar the absolute and impressive solitude of the scene. Immediately around are the silent but eloquent memorials of the past—such dim and ever dimmer abysses of the past!—vistas of dark centuries, barely rendered visible by a twinkling light of history or tradition, seen at the farther end of other even darker vistas of barbarous mediæval generations! They are all represented. They have all left their mark on that triply palimpsest surface. Even as the geologist shows us the strata of the globe's crust, one beneath the other, differentiated by the characterizing fossils each contains, and formed at epochs far distant from each other, so on this wondrous Roman plain may be traced the different *couches* of the works of bygone generations, superimposed one upon the other, and obliterating one the other. Tombs, from the princely structure which has given its name to the locality in question, to the humble road-



side slab bearing a half-obliterated name; temples, from the pagan fanes of deities whose names are forgotten on the lips of the people, though the *raison d'être* of them still lives in their hearts and fashions their lives, to the wretched lath-and-plaster saints' niches of the present day; fortresses; tottering walls and vaults of imperial pleasure-houses; huge earth-works, the purpose and meaning of which not even the archæologist can guess; foundations, shattered arches, aqueducts,—these are the characters in which History writes her mouldering records around. And the present utters no sound to distract from them the attention of the reader. Utter, utter solitude is the characteristic, and seems to be the appropriate characteristic, of the region. Possibly between your eye and the horizon the solitary figure of a horseman may be seen crossing the wide surface of the plain, or perhaps passing beneath one of the arches which are as the giant strides of the aqueduct, as it stalks across the far-stretching extent of brown grass-fields. He is doubtless a “massaro,” as the men are called to whose care the vast herds that roam over the Campagna are entrusted; and he looks, with his gun slung behind his back, his long goad—

which may do duty in the picture of him for a lance—his steeple-crowned brigand hat, and his easy and free seat upon his horse, as picturesque a figure and one as appropriate to the scene as an Arab on the desert. And his silent passage across the field of your vision has in nowise the effect of diminishing the solitariness of the scene.

These are the surroundings among which we take our way to the "meet" on a lovely bright, sunshiny day in January. Solitary! Why the old Appian Way is as much alive as an English turnpike road in the neighbourhood of a county town on market-day. Truly the ghosts who may be supposed to haunt this tomb-bordered way must conclude that some very strange new phase of the world's history has set in; they had been allowed for so many centuries to sleep their quiet sleep and dream their undisturbed dreams in peace; their rest, and the melancholy, time-consecrated repose of all that remained of what had been theirs, had been so long respected!

Not long after passing under the old archway of the Porta di San Sebastiano we come in sight of the huge circular mass of the building known as the tomb of Cæcilia Metella. Our vehicle—

for we are among the lookers-on, and not among the actors in the anticipated sport—is one in a long line of carriages which follow each other along the road. Roman coachmen never attempt to pass each other. The dust on the “*regina viarum*” is ankle-deep, and of a rich chocolate colour, composed mainly of the *débris* of “*poz-zolana*,” as the deep ruddy-brown earth is called which has made for two thousand years, and still continues to make, the excellent Roman mortar. It matters little which way the wind is. If from the north, you are covered by the clouds kicked up by the carriages behind you; if from the south, you are the victim of those which precede you. The associations which you have hitherto cherished in connection with that storied track are exposed to shocks yet more severe than the inequalities of the road—which in truth has seen better days—inflct upon your person.

“Consumedly dusty, this Viar Rappier! It’s worse by chalks than the Epsom road on a Derby Day! Why don’t they put down some macadam?” sings out, as he trots by, young Courtney Smith, a Cockney of the Cockneys, whose father made his money in Capel Court, a jovial, florid young fellow, who could be mis-

taken for nothing but an Englishman if you were to put a burnous on him and set him down to share an Arab's mess of mare's milk under a tent in the desert. Reginald Courtney Smith is always at the meet, is a great supporter of the hunt, and is got up in irreproachable style. *Not* in pink. No! The English and American members of the hunt, for the most part, do not sport red coats; the latent meaning of which I suppose to be a silent protest to the effect that they are well aware that this is not the real thing—only a make-shift to fill the void in the heart of the wanderer, which yearns for the better joys of "the shires." Be the motive what it may, American and English Romans do not hunt in pink. They leave such gaudy delight to the young Romans to whom "looking like the time" is half the battle.

"But think what dust it is!" says the Rev. Athanasius Abbott, a High Church English divine, in a coat made to be a clever imitation of a cassock, and who, if he remains much longer in Rome, will probably become a "pervert"—"the dust of vanished empires, the dust of saints and martyrs, Mr. Smith! Macadam on the Via Appia, forsooth! The next thing would be to fit up St. Peter's with pews!"

Athanasius Abbott, who, his theology aside, is a very pleasant fellow and a gentleman, and whose religious views by no means prevent his coming out to see the "meet," especially in such company as he has with him in the carriage which is next before our own, is a special favourite with the young ladies of the American and English colony; and papas of sound Protestant views sufficiently pronounced to make them care about the *isms* of their daughters would do well to keep their eyes open. The comely lady sitting opposite to him in the carriage is Mrs. Armytage Atkins, a widow from Baltimore, who has been a beauty; and the two young ladies, her daughters, who occupy the remaining seats, are such now, and very charming girls into the bargain. They perfectly well understand that Mr. Abbott is a gentleman and Mr. Smith a snob. But the latter is good-humoured, gay, mounted on a very handsome horse, and is an ever-ready partner in the ball-room. So pretty Marian Atkins, who tolerates him rather more kindly than her sister—for Nora rather gives him the cold shoulder in consequence of the annoyance it occasions her to hear him call her Norar Ratkins—Marian replies: "For my part I agree with Mr. Smith. I think that since the

empires *have* vanished, it would be a great deal better that their dust should vanish too. Which way do you think the fox will take this morning, Mr. Smith?"

Little Reginald Courtney Smith is delighted, and reins up his thoroughbred to ride by the side of the carriage. The imprudent Marian had little intended that her small bit of patronage should have the effect of attaching Mr. Smith to the side of the carriage all the rest of the way to the place of meeting. Nora gives her sister a look, and feelings not strictly such as should prevail on the inside of a cassock are generated in the heart of the Rev. Athanasius.

Just then a young American Oxonian, who has joined his family in Italy during the Christmas vacation, and who has the reputation of being the boldest rider in Rome, trots by on the other side of the Atkinses' carriage to that on which Mr. Smith is riding. Summers Deverell hails from Philadelphia, though one would say that Quaker blood was the last thing one would expect to find in his composition. He sees at a glance the state of the case as regards the attendant cavalier on the other side of the carriage, and, after raising his hat to Mrs. Atkins, with a "Lovely morning for a run, isn't it,



ma'am?" he shoots back a wicked "Wish you joy, Miss Marian!" which that young lady perfectly understands, though neither of the gentlemen does.

At that moment the line of carriages draws a little to one side, and His Royal Highness Prince Humbert dashes by in his dog-cart—an exception to what has been said about Roman coachmen not passing each other on the road. The whole turn-out of His Royal Highness is thoroughly unexceptionable, and perfectly English in style. The dog-cart, the splendid fast-trotting horse, the two grooms on the seat behind, might all have been imported from the little island in one piece. The "get up" of His Royal Highness himself is also thoroughly English, and, curiously enough, both he and his "turn-out" have a much more genuinely English appearance than the most *Anglomane* supporter of "le sport" at Chantilly was ever able to assume. His Royal Highness rides in pink, but he at present wears a buff overcoat, which will be pulled off when he mounts at the "meet." It is abundantly evident that Prince Humbert has fashioned himself, as far as the hunting-field is concerned, on English models. But I would not say of him, as used to be said with



perfect truth of that poor young Duke of Parma who was assassinated in the streets of his own capital some twenty years or so ago, that when he used to come to the Florence races the most acceptable compliment you could pay him was to go up to him, and, pretending to take him for an English groom, ask where his master was. Prince Humbert rides well, and is very constant at the meets of the hunt when he is in Rome. Mr. Courtney Smith rises in his stirrups as the Prince passes, and takes off his hat and bows ostentatiously. The Rev. Athanasius Abbott sits as motionless as a statue. He is prepared at any moment for social martyrdom in support of his opinion that Victor Emmanuel is a usurper who has no business to be at Rome.

Presently an elderly American gentleman rides past, raising his hat to the occupants of the carriage as he passes, but without speaking. He is well mounted, and his appointments are all "in good form," as the modern slang phrase has it, but very quiet. He is very evidently a gentleman, and one who, as might be easily guessed, does not like to be "loud" in his amusements in any way. By his side rides, on a queer-looking, very tall, and very raw-boned steed, a young Roman in the most brilliant of

scarlet coats, the most showy of green satin cravats, an enormous hunting-whip, which he holds as a coachman driving four-in-hand might hold his whip, and a pair of blue cloth trousers, which have wriggled up on his legs so as to display an undue portion of the boots below them.

“What is the matter with Mr. Robbins? He seems quite cross this morning, passing without a word in that manner,” says Nora Atkins.

“Don’t you see what is the matter?” returns her mother. “Can’t you make allowance for the effect of acute suffering?”

“I should not wonder if it were to end in a tragedy—upon my soul, I shouldn’t. I expect that Robbins will brain that fellow some day, I do indeed,” says Mr. Smith.

“Why? what has ‘the fellow’ done? and who is he?” inquires the Rev. Athanasius innocently.

“What! don’t you know? All Rome has been talking about it. As for who he is, that’s more than I can tell you; but I know that he is the best fun going,” replies Mr. Smith.

“What is he talking about?” says the Rev. Athanasius in a lower tone to Miss Nora Atkins,

who is sitting opposite to him on the side of the carriage farthest from Mr. Smith. "Do *you* understand what it is all about, Miss Nora?" repeats the clergyman, not above half liking the tone of the gay and gallant Smith, but, on the other hand, unwilling to be ignorant of anything that "all Rome" is talking about.

"Yes, I know what he is alluding to—a parcel of stupid nonsense," says Miss Nora, with a curl of her pretty lip. "That *thing* riding there in the red coat would stick himself close to Mr. Robbins, it seems, all the time they were out last "meet," and the old gentleman was very much disgusted with it."

"Well, I can't say he looks like a very attractive companion," says the clergyman; "but have you no idea who or what he is, Mr. Smith?"

"Who or what? Well, as for what he is, he is some Italian snob, with less than the ninth part of a tailor's idea of riding. I take it he sticks to old Robbins because he considers him a safe leader. At the end of the day last time, after having been with considerable difficulty persuaded to put up a revolver which he had brought with him for the purpose of shooting the fox, he was seen pressing with eager

hospitality on poor Robbins some sausage and 'ricotta,' which he drew forth from his coat pocket after he had been riding on it all day. You may conceive the disgust of poor Robbins and the inextinguishable laughter of the whole field. Another man would have shared the fun, but Robbins could not brook being made one of the actors in such a scene. And now there he is again, and Robbins can no more shake him off than if he were chained to his horse's tail, knowing all the while what a burst of laughter there will be when he rides on the field attended by his satellite! Robbins can't bear to be laughed at."

"Well, I do think that it ought to be brought in 'justifiable homicide' if Mr. Robbins *does* 'brain' him, as Mr. Smith suggests," says Miss Nora in an undertone.

"But Mr. Smith does not sufficiently reflect on the consequences that might arise if such a mode of ridding one's self of disagreeable and adhesive people were recognized," rejoins the Rev. Athanasius in the same tone. "I confess, all the same, that I rather sympathize with the feelings of Mr. Robbins."

Shortly after that the carriages pass under the shadow of the huge round tower and the

remains of mediæval walls—mushroom upstarts in comparison to its own venerable antiquity—which have remained attached to it ever since Pope Boniface VIII. in the thirteenth century turned it into one of the fortress-strongholds of the Gaetani, to which family he belonged. This grand old tower was built nearly two thousand years ago as a monument to the memory of Cæcilia Metella, the wife of Crassus and the daughter of Quintus Cæcilius Metellus. The reader will no doubt remember Byron's lines on this tomb in the fourth canto of *Childe Harold*. The High Church clergyman quotes them for the benefit of Nora Atkins as the carriage passes beneath the tower and turns into the field beyond it, through a gate in the half-ruinous wall that thereabouts bounds the road, the narrow passage of which makes it necessary for Mr. Smith to resign his place by the side of the carriage. In another minute he is in the midst of the horsemen who have gathered around the hounds, which have just arrived on the ground under the care of the whipper-in; and the carriage is being manœuvred, not without some difficulty, over the soft and uneven turf, among the crowd of vehicles that throng the field and are crossing and recrossing each

other in all directions in search of the best spot of vantage for seeing the "throwing off."

We turn in at the gate immediately behind the Atkinses party, but in the next minute are separated from them in the throng. The scene around us is truly an extraordinary one. The part of the Campagna overlooked from the field in question, which occupies the highest part of one of the rising knolls so frequent in the district, is one of the most picturesque that can be found within its limits. I have endeavoured partially to describe the distant outlook on which the eye rests at the extremity of the Campagna. But the objects more immediately around are striking and suggestive in the highest degree. The ruins of the mediæval fortress of the Gaetani, showing like a worn-out rake knocked to pieces by riotous living in comparative youth by the side of the stalwart hale old age of the tower, their senior by thirteen centuries, and bidding fair to outlive them by thirteen more, are in the highest degree picturesque. The grand line of arches on the left, striding across the plain in solemn and solitary grandeur, marks the course of the Aqua Claudia. The lofty mediæval tower called the Torre Fiscale, on the same side of the road,



tells the tale of days more utterly vanished than those of the more storied pagan times. Lastly—but by no means least in the value of its contribution to the beauty of the scene—there is at some little distance to the southward a large clump of pines, the deep verdure of which contrasts admirably with the brown tones of the remainder of the landscape. And over all there is that ineffably beautifying light of the Roman sky, which seems by some inexplicable peculiarity of atmosphere to have the specialty of freedom from all garish quality, and the gift of imparting—even while it gilds the world of ruins it falls on—a pensiveness to the impressions inspired by gazing on them.

Walter Scott bids those who would view fair Melrose aright to visit it by the pale moonlight. Those who appreciate the goodness of the advice would hardly perhaps think the time for visiting "aright" the matchless scene I have attempted to describe, is when all the place is brilliant with the scarlet coats of sportmen and the gay dresses of the ladies in a hundred carriages, and the air is filled with jocund, ringing voices, among which the familiar tone of our own tongue largely predominates. Yet a "meet" at the tomb of Cæcilia Metella is worth seeing, if



only because most assuredly such a conjunction of sights, sounds, ideas, and associations can be met with nowhere else.

It is getting on toward mid-day, and the enthusiastic sportsmen do not seem to be in any great hurry for the "throw off." It may be suspected perhaps that, to many of them, the pleasantest part of the day's work consists in showing off themselves and their horses among the carriages, with the occupants of which a deal of flirting is done before the real business of the day commences. "Do your devoirs, gentle knights! Bright eyes behold your deeds!" used to be the encouragement proclaimed aloud by the heralds in the olden days of joust and tournament. And on the present occasion the impatient crack from time to time of the huntsman's whip might be understood to be eloquent in the same sense. But the bright eyes seem to be more potent to detain the cavaliers where they are than to stimulate to any deeds save riding about saunteringly from one carriage door to another. It seems difficult to guess what they are waiting for. One odd specialty of the Roman hunt seems to be that the hounds are in no greater hurry than their human playfellows. They

stand or sit in a group in the centre of the field in a state of apparently perfect contentment; and their placidity is accounted for when we observe that they are, though pretty dogs, a great deal fatter than would be deemed tolerable in the little island.

Meanwhile, the field has become very full. The latest laggards have arrived from the city, and some four or five ladies are seen among those mounted for the sport. At last, when the sun has long passed the meridian, they move off saunteringly and easily enough to the south-westward, and we follow them with our eyes till the last of the trail is lost behind one of the innumerable inequalities in the surface of the Campagna, and they disappear in the folds of a valley where there is a little cover, and where, as we hear afterward, they find a fox, which does not take them so far afield as to prevent the entire party being back in Rome in time to dress for a seven-o'clock dinner.

## CHAPTER II.

## MRS. ATKINS' "DAY."

THE most remarkable change in the social aspects of the Eternal City which has resulted from the new order of things in the political world is the separation of its society into two portions. It is not the only change which most strikes those who knew Rome under its old *régime*, but it is to those who are making their first acquaintance with continental society the most peculiar and novel feature in it. Certainly the state of things which now prevails in this respect in Rome cannot be supposed to be as strange to Italians as it would be to Americans or English. For the time has been when every city in the Peninsula was divided between two parties, whose feelings towards each other it would be a libel on the animal creation to liken to those of cats and dogs.

The genius of one whose every word has the privilege of conferring deathless fame has made the quarrels and the hatreds of the Montagues and Capulets proverbial throughout the world. But every city in Italy was divided and torn by party spirit as fierce and unforgiving as that which divided Verona, and Rome had its Orsini and Colonnas, not to speak of the innumerable partisanships and jealousies which arose from the intrigues bred in the bosom of the Sacred College. More recently, however, the society at Rome was marked rather by a special unity. The men who were sighing and secretly plotting for the new order of things, which has come at last, were not "in society" at Rome at all. Society consisted exclusively of princes, cardinals and their hangers-on, and foreigners; and, save in the meetings where the foreign visitors made their own society for themselves, dreadfully dull that very select and dignified society used to be—dull beyond the power of Transalpine minds to conceive.

It was at the princely houses, for the most part, that these indescribably sad and festive throngs used to assemble. I am speaking, it must be remembered, of the old days when Gregory XVI. was Pope, when all social

matters were very different at Rome from what they have been since or ever will be again—when, for example, the number of visitors from the United States was very small in comparison with what it is now. The English were also fewer; and I think I may pay both those nations the compliment of saying that if their members had thronged those vast and dreary drawing-rooms in such numbers as they are now seen in at Rome, it would have been impossible that the gatherings should have been so deadly dull. However, there was at least the advantage that everybody knew everybody; and though everybody had very little to say to anybody, bows and greetings were at least good-humoured, and there were no sour looks—no *looking* of daggers, though more might occasionally have been used in the streets than was usual in other civilized communities. There were sure to be from half a dozen to half a score or so of cardinals, magnificent in their scarlet stockings, and coats bound with scarlet edging. They generally used to gather together, and very frequently on a cold evening on the hearthrug, looking like a covey of some sort of huge red-legged fowls. The present writer, then a youngster, well remembers how,

his curiosity having been excited by such a group, he gradually edged himself into the immediate neighbourhood of these specimens of a class of humanity then quite new to him, speculating much on the nature of the words of wisdom which must have been passing from such lips to such ears. Presently he was able to catch the following utterances enunciated with much deliberation, and in those pure and well-articulated accents which have made the "*lingua Toscana in bocca Romana*" famous : "*E molto male, sai, di mangiare troppo la sera.*" ("It is very bad, you know, to eat too much of an evening.") The speaker was a tall, meagre old man, with a retreating forehead and parrot-like beak, whose long nether limbs exhibited a magnificent expanse of scarlet stocking. Then there followed a chorus of "*Gias*" and nods and grunts, which seemed to indicate that sundry of his hearers could testify to the truth of that profound dictum from the depths of their own sad experiences.

The drawing-room in which this occurred was that of one of the princely houses, and its mistress was one of the leaders of Roman fashion. It was a very long room, and all the ladies sat in rows against the walls.



Every now and then one of the “porporati”—as their eminences the members of the Sacred College are called, from the prevailing colour of their dress—would march up to one of this long file of noble dames and address a few words to her. Whenever this happened, not only the lady addressed, but all those in her immediate neighbourhood, rose and remained standing as long as that gracious presence shone on her, whilst any layman who might have been speaking to her fell back.

These princely entertainments (?) of the good old times were conducted, *au reste*, in a very simple and unostentatious fashion. Of the vulgarities of wealth it must be owned one saw less in days when no class had any cause to fear the possibility of the class beneath it treading on its kibes, than may be witnessed in more progressive times. The only manifestations of wealth consisted in the grandeur of the *locale*, the superb show of diamonds on the heads and necks of the ladies, and the great number and gorgeous liveries of the servants. The rooms were not very profusely lighted, and the refreshments offered to the guests were of the simplest kind—a glass of

lemonade, with possibly a biscuit, or the like. Nor was there ever the smallest attempt at amusement of any kind beyond the sparing exchange of a few words of the very flattest and most *banale* description conceivable. Most of the ladies present, the old not at all less than the young—all of them, probably, save a few who were understood to be going in for a quite special and almost conventual degree of sanctity and perfection of life—had “cavalieri serventi,” who were invited quite as a matter of course, wherever the ladies they *served* were invited. But no mistake would be greater than to suppose that this circumstance derogated in any degree from the severe and almost austere proprieties of the assembly. The conduct of the “serving gentlemen” to their respective ladies would be that of a somewhat specially attentive husband who has been married a dozen years. As for any “scandal” or remark of any kind, the only possibility would have been that if any one of the *cavalieri* thus bound to service had been observed on any number of occasions to neglect his due “service,” some grave word of disapprobation might have been whispered by the Princess of This into the ear of the Duchess That, in much the same tone

as the neglect of a husband might be censured in communities on the other side of the Alps.

Since the new order of things has fallen upon these scarlet priests and priest-descended princes and noble dames with the crushing sense of a world falling into ruin around them, there has been an end to such gatherings as have been described, and the state-rooms in the magnificent palaces have been shut up, or open only to very much smaller and yet more select coteries of near friends meeting to groan together over the appalling cataclysm that has happened. Larger assemblies, however select and confined to approved members of their own party, would have the appearance of festivity and pleasure, which is held to be quite out of keeping with the present mournful condition of circumstances. When the Holy Father is in sorrow and in eclipse, how should his children join in revelry? Mournfulness and abstention from anything like gaiety or amusement is therefore the mark of the highest "ton" and nicest attention to the "convenances" among the faithful adherents of the old order of things. It is considered *de mise* too, among the members of the great *papalini* houses, to affect an increased degree of simplicity, and even of poverty, as marking the

period of eclipse through which they are passing. We hear of a duchess being received by a princess with a "Cara Maria, how well that silk of yours looks since it was turned!" It is understood to be made manifest by such means as these how utterly and fatally prosperity, happiness, good order, and the very framework of society itself, have been smashed and overturned by Victor Emmanuel and his godless usurpation.

The effect produced by this condition of social aspects, as regards the foreign residents and visitors, is peculiar, and often to the observant bystander amusing enough. It is hardly in the nature of English or Americans to remain long in the vicinity of a contest without taking part in it on one side or the other; and of course individual opinions and temperaments predispose different people to opposite sides in a quarrel which involves all the most important issues, both in the sphere of politics and in that of religion, which can present themselves to a man's mind. But as a general rule it might be expected that the great majority of both Americans and English would find themselves more in sympathy with the new than with the old order of things in Rome. The great

bulk of our people are Protestant; they are citizens of free communities; they cannot but think that the great change which Italy has succeeded in bringing about in her destinies and fortunes is for her own happiness and to the advantage of the world in general. And doubtless the majority, the large majority, of both Americans and English are anti-papal and well-wishers to the new order of things in Italy. But such is not universally the case. The causes which operate to produce a select body of Papal sympathizers among the American and English visitors at Rome are twofold. In the first place, there are some Catholics, either such from their birth, or "perverts," as it has become the fashion to call them in England, though we, not presuming to pronounce theological judgments, may be content to call them converts. Of this class of sympathizers with the Pope we will not consider the present court competent to make any further remark. Our attention shall be directed to those whose Papal proclivities arise from the second of the two causes above alluded to. It is not altogether easy to make this cause and its operation, which are palpable and intelligible enough to dwellers in the Eternal City, quite equally intelligible to those who have never



been so. Perhaps the shortest phrase which can be used to convey my meaning is to say that Papal leanings are a specially "genteel" thing in Rome. There are various causes which tend to produce this result. In the first place, "distinction" is, of course, the aim of all the socially ambitious. But distinction achieved by personal excellence or eminence is not within the reach of us all. How, then, shall plain Mrs. Tomkins, with her three daughters, attain the social distinction for which her soul pants? She is more or less dimly conscious that none of them are specially beautiful or witty or endowed with that nameless quality of manner which has the gift to charm. Perhaps she is not even very rich. What shall Mrs. Tomkins and Miss Mary, Miss Margaret and Miss Lucy Tomkins do to "distinguish" themselves—to draw some hedging line around them which shall mark them as not mere common creatures of the "undistinguished" crowd? Mrs. Tomkins has already had her cards printed as "Madame Lespinasse Tomkynnes," and the young ladies write themselves respectively Miss Marie, Miss Marguerite, and Miss Lucie Lespinasse Tomkynnes. (The "Lespinasse" is a brilliant invention of Miss Marie's, who was at a Parisian school conducted



by a lady of that name.) This judicious modification of orthography has done much, but not enough. The question still arises, What shall Mrs.—we beg her pardon, Madame—Tomkynnes do to show forth to all men that she and her daughters are not as other dowagers and daughters of dowagers are? Turn Catholic? It is decidedly *bon genre* at Rome. But that is a serious step. Some reminiscences of the sturdy Protestantism of the dear departed John Tomkins still oppose themselves to such a measure. Then, too, the thing cannot be done without a certain amount of trouble and inconvenience. Above all, it is not necessary to the end in view. It will serve the purpose equally well—indeed, in some respects, better—to have a leaning towards Catholic doctrine with strong Papal sympathies, and a fund of tender regrets for the “good old times,” when, in vulgar fact, Mrs. Tomkins was the joy of Tomkins’s life in London or New York, but when, according to the views of life which now rule the family fancies, she was basking in the smiles of cardinals and bishops, and life at Rome was “Oh! so different, my dear, from what it is now!” So Mrs. Lespinasse Tomkynnes becomes “very high” (theologically speaking), talks about

monsignori, and affects to have special and private information from the Vatican; and Miss Marie, Miss Marguerite, and Miss Lucie have silver crosses on their prayer-books, and carry gold crosses as big as a bishop's on their fair bosoms. That in some respects such a position as that assumed by the Tomkynnes family has even greater advantages than those belonging to a declared convert is as true as that a fish lying on the bank engages less of the fisherman's attention than one which is nibbling at the bait.

But there are, as has been said, other reasons why Romanizing proclivities are a useful aid to social ambition in Rome. Of course, all the social *sommités* in Rome when Rome belonged to the Pope were intensely Papal. In the days before the advent of the King of Italy and the new order of things the middle and professional classes were those which were hostile to the Papal government. Almost all those of the Roman Upper Ten who were not cardinals or bishops or prelates of one sort or another were princes or otherwise titled nobles of families, while almost all of them have sprung and dated their wealth and greatness from some one of the popes. The representatives of these families

are great and magnificent in tolerably accurate proportion to the degree in which the Pope their founder was grasping and shameless in the prostitution of his office to the worldly aggrandizement of his family. To all these men, and to their families and friends and hangers-on, of course the new order of things and the deposition of the Pope from his position as a sovereign prince are gall and wormwood. The time will infallibly come when the legislation of the new kingdom of Italy will put an end to the social primacy of these noble families. The law which compels the division of the immense properties which have descended in unbroken masses from generation to generation for so many centuries will in the course of a few years destroy these great houses, or at least their predominance. This enforced division of property among all a man's children at his death has been by far the hardest blow of all which the great Roman families have had to bear. It is the utter and inevitable destruction of all that was dearest to them. Meantime, while the glory yet remains to them, they are, as may be easily understood, violently and bitterly Papal; and, as is always the case with a small and beaten party, while affecting

exclusiveness they are well pleased to welcome within their pale sympathisers and adherents whom in the days of their prosperity they would not have cared to admit.

I once knew a little girl who, having been naughty, was sent to sit by herself in a back room, from whence she was presently heard, calling out at the top of her little voice to those who had exiled her, "You shan't come into *my* parlour! I send you all out of *this* parlour!" Now, the adherents of the old *régime* at Rome conduct their social lives very much on the principle of this naughty little girl. Finding that their opinions and sympathies condemn them to isolation, they would fain persuade themselves and others that they are forbidding all the world outside their own circle from coming into *their* parlour. Yet they are all the time very much pleased by applications for admission to it, and very ready to welcome the applicants. The Mrs. Tomkynses of the world therefore find that the affectation of Papal sympathies expressed with sufficient warmth may entitle them to the much-coveted reward of being admitted to a social circle which is at the same time restricted and marked as a specialty, and which consists mainly of those who lately

were, and would still fain consider themselves, the apex of the social pyramid.

The Tomkinse transformed into Tomkynneses and the Wigrams transformed into Fitzwygrammes are not called upon to make any sacrifice whatever to their convictions and opinions. For the outer world is by no means intolerant in the matter, at least so far as the foreign visitors and residents, with whom we are here chiefly concerned, have anything to say in the matter. None of the American or English Romans would in any degree reject Mrs. Tomkynnes or her daughters, especially if pretty, because of their Papalistic *velléités*. A smile perhaps, or a word of gentle quizzing, may mark their sense of the peculiarities of those ladies behind their backs. And if such occurred even before their faces, it would only be attributed by the objects of it to the natural jealousy excited by their own privileged position.

It is a position which affords endless opportunities for little social passages indicating that the occupiers of it belong to a sphere apart, a very select and exalted sphere, with the ways and manners of which the world around them is wholly unacquainted. Take, for example, a



little scene sketched from the life as it occurred not many days after the "meet" at the tomb of Cæcilia Metella.

The time is five o'clock in the afternoon: the scene is Mrs. Atkins' drawing-room on the third floor of a house in the Corso, on the best—*i.e.*, the left hand—side of the way as you go toward the Piazza di Venezia. A long, steep and rather dark stair conducts to Mrs. Atkins' apartment. But nobody makes any objection to that in Rome. On a third floor you are farther out of the noise of the Corso and farther from any suspicion of *malaria*. Besides, first floors could not be found in favoured situations for a quarter of those who wish to spend their winter at Rome. Mrs. Atkins' apartment is pretty, nicely furnished, and filled with all those little elegances and knick-knacks that give a homelike look to a room; for she has passed many seasons in Rome—is, indeed, as the longer residents love to style themselves, an "old Roman." Mrs. Atkins is a sensible woman, and has not transmogrified herself into Atkynnes; and Marian and Nora Atkins are cleverish, well-educated girls, with more brains in each of their little brown heads than are located under all the abundant blonde locks of



all the Tomkynnes family. It is Mrs. Atkins' "day." Every dog has his day, the proverb tells us; and at Rome as much, or very near it, may be said of every lady. It is the day of the week on which visitors know that they will find her "at home," and will also find tea and cakes on the table and a knot of common acquaintances assembled. On the present occasion there are Mrs. Tomkynnes and her two younger daughters, besides the Rev. Athanasius Abbott, who is generally to be met wherever there is a possibility of getting speech of Marian Atkins. The pretty Marian is rather disposed to use him as a quizzing-block, while Lucie Tomkynnes decidedly sets her cap at him; and he, with the usual perversity of human nature, and despite what ought to be the attraction of common principles, very evidently prefers the gibes of Miss Marian to the blandishments of Miss Lucie. There are also present little Reginald Courtney Smith, good-natured, self-satisfied and vulgar as ever; an American artist, famous for knowing everybody and everything in Rome, and for being the prince of good fellows; old Miss Alderney, an English old maid of good family resident in Rome from a time when the "memory of men runneth not to the con-

trary"—one of those persons who, for some inexplicable reason, are permitted by society to do and say whatever they please with perfect social impunity; and one or two others. Miss Marie Tomkynnes has not accompanied her mother. She is less frequently seen in general society, and is vaguely understood to be very much occupied by some still more vaguely conceived operations, the ultimate result of which is to be that the Pope shall "enjoy his own again."

Miss Nora Atkins is busy at the tea-table in a further corner of the room, and scheming to get rid of Courtney Smith, who hovers about her ready to carry tea-cups and cream-jugs at her behest, and torments her by his continual iteration of "Miss Norar" in accents of the purest Cockney tongue; while the American artist tempts her to laugh, and yet vexes her, by gravely addressing her with an exaggeration of a similar pronunciation, of which imitation, happily, Mr. Smith remains wholly unconscious. Near the fire Mrs. Atkins, Mrs. Tomkynnes, and Miss Alderney are sitting together. And near the window are Marian Atkins, the two Miss Tomkynnes, and the Rev. Athanasius Abbott.

Miss Marguerite Tomkynnes is enlarging to

her friend Miss Atkins on the angelic sweetness and other saintly virtues of the Principessa Clorinda Pereviggini, at whose house she and her mother had been on the previous evening. None of the other persons present, except Mr. Athanasius Abbott (and he but slightly), have the honour and glory of knowing any of the members of that princely house; and Miss Tomkynnes feels keenly the triumph of knowing that fact, and of being able to discourse from her own experience of persons, things, and places to which the mere outside world cannot penetrate.

“Was it a hop?” inquires jovial little Courtney Smith, who has just brought a cup of tea to Miss Marguerite Tomkynnes.

That young lady rewards him with an annihilating glance, in which contempt and astonishment struggle for the mastery. Miss Lucie and the Rev. Athanasius exchange glances.

“The balls at the Palazzo Pereviggini, which those who remember them know were among the most splendid in Rome, have not been given since the robber troops of the usurper entered the walls of Rome,” says Miss Marguerite with freezing dignity as soon as she is able to recover herself. “I thought,” she adds with a wither-

ing sneer, "that everybody knew *that*, although there may be persons incapable of comprehending the lofty sentiments which force the prince and princess to feel that such doings would be inconsistent with either propriety or delicacy of feeling under present circumstances."

"But the receptions, I suppose, continue in a quiet way?" asks Marian Atkins.

"Receptions? Well, the word seems perhaps to imply something of a more general and miscellaneous character than the very small gatherings at the Palazzo Pereviggini. We are never above a dozen—more often not above half that number. Last night there was nobody but the prince and princess themselves, the dear old cardinal, and ourselves."

(N.B. Miss Marguerite is perfectly well aware that Miss Atkins has not the smallest idea *what* cardinal is intended, and expresses herself in these indefinite terms for the twofold purpose of indicating her own intimacy with the "dear" individual in scarlet stockings referred to, and of enjoying the sense of superiority afforded to her by her friend's ignorance. Miss Marian, on the other hand, is equally well aware of the existence of these motives in the mind of Miss Tomkynnes, and would not for

the world gratify her by asking which member of the Sacred College graced the Pereviggini salons on the occasion in question.)

After pausing a while in vain for the expected inquiry, Miss Marguerite resumes: "It is impossible to *imagine*, my dear, the charm of these little *réunions*—the absence of formality, the *abandon*, the simplicity. As for Clorinda—for the princess, I mean," continues Miss Marguerite, pretending to pull herself up abruptly and to be confused at making such a slip outside of the pale of the select—"I cannot tell you what she is—her grace, her sweetness, her angelic patience, her refined intimacy of manner."

"Ah, yes. Well, I *can* tell you, my dears, what the Princess Pereviggini is — or was, rather," screams old Miss Alderney, who, with her usual sharpness of ear, has heard all that was passing from the other side of the room: "I know all about her. She was the daughter of the old Cavaliere Vacca, who had been the late Pope's barber! His Holiness made him a cavaliere, and the Pereviggini man made the daughter a princess."

"The stupid old thing is confounding the late princess dowager with the present princess," says Miss Marguerite very much under her



breath, for she does not wish to be again overheard. "There was, I am aware, some story of a *mèsalliance*. But that was not even the mother of the present princess. What should that spiteful old maid know about it? I assure you the Princess Clorinda is one of the most elegant women you ever saw."

"I should think, from your description, that the evenings at the Palazzo Pereviggini might be perhaps a little dull," says Miss Marian, with a sly look at the artist, who has just stalked across the room from the tea-table to the window where the group of people are sitting.

"Dull! My dear girl, how little do you know of the ways of that sort of people! Dull! I never enjoy an evening anywhere else so much. There is such a refinement, such a—— I hardly know how to make you understand what I mean."

"I can't say I do quite understand it," says Miss Marian, again exchanging glances with the young artist; "but what do you talk about—last night, now, for instance?"

"Oh, there are so many things! When people have subjects of common interest you know there can never be any lack of conversation. Then there is always news from the



Vatican. To *us* it is a matter of the deepest interest to hear from day to day how the Holy Sufferer bears his martyrdom. And there is hardly a day that the cardinal has not been at the Vatican. He was telling us last night that there never was anything equal to the angelic resignation and patience with which that martyred prince endures his sufferings. It is one of the most touching things I ever heard. And I have reason to know—I am hardly sure that I am at liberty to mention this—one hears so many things in the set we frequent that it would be the *blackest* treason to repeat—but I *think* I may say this much—and I am sure you won't repeat it—that the intention is that His Holiness shall be canonized after his death."

"Indeed! I shall be sure not to mention it," replies Miss Marian; "but tell me, is the prince brilliant in conversation? I must say he does not look like it."

"I was not aware, my dear, that you had any acquaintance with the Pereviggini," cries Miss Marguerite with the sharp and snappish accent of one who feels that his special and peculiar property is being invaded and encroached on.

"Nor have I, my dear Miss Tomkynnes, the least in the world. But I saw an old gentleman

all alone in a carriage once on the Pincian, and was told that it was the Prince Perevigginì," returns Miss Marian.

"He is the most dignified of men! the most thorough gentleman! a prince, every inch of him!" exclaims Miss Marguerite with gushing enthusiasm.

"And that is not saying much for him, Miss Marg'ret, for there's not so very many inches of him, all told," puts in Mr. Courtney Smith. "I saw the old boy once," he goes on, unheeding and unconscious of the look of horror and disgust on the Tomkynnes' faces—"I saw him down on his marrow-bones in the *Gee-soo* church—old fellow with a sugarloaf head and a snout like a weasel."

"Mr. Courtney Smith is more accurate in description than elegant in phrase," laughs Miss Alderney from the other side of the room.

"Vulgar wretches!" hisses Miss Marguerite in a fierce whisper. "It is generally supposed," she adds aloud with crushingly cold sarcasm, "by those who are accustomed to the society of such circles, that Prince Giulio Cesare Perevigginì is a complete specimen of the finished gentleman."

"Well, he does look pretty nearly finished,

poor old fellow ! and no mistake," returns the elegant Mr. Courtney Smith.

Miss Marguerite does not consent to give any answer to this speech save a superb toss of the head.

"As for the shape of his head and the shape of his nose, they are not his fault, poor old gentleman !" says Miss Marian Atkins, anxious in her own house to smooth matters between her guests ; "and I declare, for my own part," she continues, with another shy glance at her friend the artist, "that as far as my own limited opportunities of observation have gone, the type of head and nose which Mr. Smith has so graphically described are very far from being unaristocratic."

"Of course, my dear. Nobody would suspect *you* of talking such vulgar nonsense," says Miss Marguerite, wholly unconscious of the satire lurking in her friend's little speech. "How I do wish that it could be managed for you to know the Pereviggini !" she adds in a grateful gush.

"Oh, thank you," replies Miss Marian, rather alarmed ; "but it would be quite out of our line, you know. We are *d'un altro mondo* ; and then, you know, though I have no doubt your friends are very distinguished people and all that sort

of thing, *tutti i gusti son' gusti*, and I am afraid that we should find the evenings at the Pereviggini Palace just a little dull. We are worldlings, you know, my dear Miss Tomkynnes, and to introduce us to the princess would be a mere casting of pearls before swine."

"Oh, my dear, you must not say that. But to imagine that such society can be dull! Of course if you refuse to interest yourself in the important matters—in the hopes and fears, I may say, without, I hope, breaking confidences which are sacred—which occupy our thoughts—— But why should you not feel an interest in them?" pleads Miss Marguerite, who has conceived the sudden idea of making a convert of her friend.

"I am afraid we are not the right sort for that kind of thing," says Miss Marian, rising to break off a conversation which is showing a tendency to become troublesome.

And here we may drop the curtain upon a little scene which may serve to illustrate one of the phases of social life in Rome as it exists at the present day.

## CHAPTER III.

## A MOONLIGHT VISIT TO THE COLISEUM.

AMONG the things that "everybody does" at Rome—that everybody does at least once, and many do a great many times—is a visit by moonlight to the Coliseum. It is an observance sufficiently *de rigueur* to justify the formation of a party for the purpose, being considered as one of the special social aspects of Anglo-American life in Rome. It is so much a thing to be done that, in addition to all those who are capable of feeling and appreciating the beauty and the poetry of the thing, all those who are utterly incapable of any such appreciation must at least pretend to enjoy it. And no doubt there are many who have little enough of poetical feeling upon the subject, and whom it would nevertheless be unjust to accuse of having pretended to enjoy it when in truth they get no enjoyment out of it. There are

enjoyments to be had out of such an occasion which cannot be said exactly to depend on any poetical appreciation, and which are yet genuine enough in their kind. Why else was little Courtney Smith so very anxious to be permitted to join the party which was proposed by the Atkins girls before they and their friends separated on the occasion of the kettledrum at which we requested the reader to be present some little time ago? Nor, as the judicious reader will observe, is there anything to prevent the most poetical-minded of the “maids who love the moon,” as Tom Moore sang, from equally enjoying a visit to the Coliseum, regarded from the latter of the two points of view which have been indicated. The greater includes the less.

In truth, Fashion has sound reason to back her in enforcing the rule that you *must* go and see the Coliseum by moonlight. It is a most lovely vision—a thing of beauty absolutely matchless of its kind. So it is settled that all those who had been present on the occasion of the kettledrum at the house of Mrs. Atkins shall take part in the projected excursion, and that certain other mutual friends shall be invited to join them. It is arranged that they shall all meet at the entrance to the amphi-



theatre nearest to the Via Sacra at ten o'clock; and Mr. Abbott has undertaken to give the *custode* due notice to be there to receive them, and to have a due supply of torches in readiness at that day and hour.

The Tomkynnes party, bringing with them Mr. Abbott on the box of their carriage, are the first to arrive at the trysting-place. It is a superb moonlight night, and the shadows under the yawning arches are all the more pitchy dark from the contrast with that sharply outlined blackness which the shadows cast by the Italian moonlight show in so remarkable a manner. Mr. Abbott, having busied himself with handing the ladies from their carriage, and with shawling and cloaking them with the care which the Roman night air renders necessary, strolls into the area of the huge amphitheatre with Miss Marguerite on his arm. It is the first time either the lady or the gentleman has been there since the recent opening of the ground for the sake of archaeological explorations, and the removal of the great cross from the centre and of the little buildings called "stations" from their places about the circumference of the area. A sympathetic groan bursts from each of them.

“What will not this wretched government profane?” cries the reverend gentleman. “Surely they might have spared a spot sanctified by such memories as this is!”

“And so frightfully dangerous too!” says Miss Marguerite, pointing to the huge trenches which have been excavated, and which, in truth, all unprotected as they are, might form a very treacherous pitfall to incautious strangers, especially in the uncertain light.

“What can be expected? What do such people care for the protection of life and limb? Ah, my dear Miss Marguerite! wrong is wrong and right is right, and no sophistry will make it otherwise,” says the Reverend Athanasius in the tone of a man who is propounding some profound and newly discovered truth.

“I declare,” returns Miss Marguerite, “that if I had been alone I should have in all probability fallen into that hideous pit and broken my neck. I am so impulsive, so—so absorbed by the interest of the scene! What a mercy that I had your arm, Mr. Abbott!”

“Of course I should not have thought of letting you come into the building alone,” says the reverend and gallant gentleman with a slight pressure of the arm that is hanging on

his own. For not only are Miss Marguerite's "views" such as tend to produce a perfect sympathy between them, but she is besides an exceedingly pretty girl, with large well-opened blue eyes and a great abundance of glossy chestnut-coloured hair. Her sister Lucie is very like her, save that she has not to the same degree the advantage of the very fine figure which Miss Marguerite possesses, being somewhat shorter and somewhat more thickly made. Miss Marguerite is magnificent in this respect; and it has been unfortunately repeated to her that some artist has said that it was impossible to conceive a more graceful outline than that afforded by the kneeling figure of Marguerite Tomkynnes as she was once seen bending over a fald-stool in the nave of one of the Roman churches. This unhappy speech had much to answer for in the way of having confirmed the young lady in her High Church and Romanizing convictions. It was dangerous ever after to go into a church with her, for if there was a fald-stool in the nave, as is generally the case in the Roman churches, it was more than an even bet that Miss Marguerite would feel a desire to devote a minute or two to silent devotion. And it must be owned that practice had

perfected her in the art to such a degree that nothing in the way of falling folds and sweeping draperies could be more perfect than the outline presented by the fall of her robe on such occasions. Her rising, too, and her curtsy to the altar are perfect studies, which the Rev. Athanasius Abbott has on more occasions than one attentively observed.

"I think our friends have arrived," says Miss Marguerite, as she and her cavalier are standing at the edge of the newly excavated trench, looking down on the dim forms of arches and huge walls, the substructure of the mighty fabric, barely visible like huge architectural ghosts in the uncertain moonlight. "I hear the voices of the Atkins girls, and that loud laugh of theirs which no sentiment of reverence or feeling for time and place ever mitigates."

The Rev. Athanasius makes no response to this little feminine tirade, and the two return to the archway by which the area is entered on the side of the Forum and the Via Sacra, where the ladies of the Atkins family, with Miss Alderney occupying the fourth place in their carriage and Mr. Reginald Smith on the box, are alighting and joining their friends under the archway.

"How dark it is here! And what a contrast to the lovely flood of moonlight that is making the Forum look—oh, so beautiful!" exclaims Miss Nora Atkins.

"I declare that the gloom of these archways, with their long vistas losing themselves in pitchy darkness, is quite awful. I don't know what one might not fancy," rejoins her sister, Miss Marian.

"Perhaps you might fancy what Lord Macaulay fancied here one night, when he was quite a young man. Didn't you ever hear the story? Old Templeman told it me the other day. He's as good as an *Annual Register* for all that has happened in Rome for the last hundred years, or pretty nearly," says Mr. Smith.

"No. Lord Macaulay? What was it, Mr. Smith? Do tell us the story," replies Miss Marian.

So, while waiting for the others of the party, Mr. Smith repeats his anecdote, delighted to find himself for once the centre of a knot of listeners. "Well, Macaulay was at Rome when he was quite a young man—before he was celebrated at all, you know—and one night he came here to do just what we are doing. Only that

I am quite sure he hadn't the luck of doing it in such company," begins little Reg Smith, with an insinuating glance into the pretty eyes of Nora Atkins. "Well, he was all by himself away there under those dark arches, where it is as black as night, when all of a sudden a man in a large cloak brushed past him rather rudely, as Macaulay thought, and passed on into the darkness. Macaulay's first impulse was to clap his hand to his watch-pocket; and sure enough he found that his watch was not there. He looked after the man, who he doubted not had stolen his watch as he brushed past him, and peering into the darkness could just distinguish the outline of a figure moving farther away. Macaulay, without the loss of a second, rushed after him, overtook him, and seizing him by the collar, demanded his watch. Now, Macaulay, whatever he may have done afterward, could at that time speak very little Italian, and understood none when spoken. So he was obliged to limit his attack on the thief to a violent shaking of him by the collar and an angry repetition of the demand, 'Orologio! orologio!' The man thus attacked poured forth a torrent of rapidly spoken words, of which Macaulay understood not one syllable.



But he again administered a severe shaking to his captive, stamping his foot angrily on the ground, and again vociferating, ‘Orologio! orologio!’ Whereupon the detected thief drew forth the watch and handed it to his captor. Macaulay, satisfied with his prowess in having thus recaptured his property, and not caring for the trouble of pursuing the matter any further, turned on his heel as he pocketed the watch, and saw nothing more of the man. But when he returned to his apartment at night, his landlady met him at the door, holding out something in her hand, and saying, ‘Oh, sir, you left your watch on the table, so I thought it better to take care of it. Here it is.’ ‘Good gracious! What is this, then? What is the meaning of it?’ stammered Macaulay, drawing from his pocket the watch which he had so gallantly recovered in the Coliseum. It was a watch he had never seen before. The truth was plain: *he* had been the thief! The poor man he had so violently attacked and apostrophized in the darkness and solitude of the Coliseum arches had been terrified into surrendering his own watch to the resolute ruffian who, as he conceived, had pursued him to rob him. The next morning Macaulay, not a little crestfallen,

hastened to the office of the *questor* with the watch and told his story. ‘Ah, I see!’ said the *questor*: ‘you had better leave the watch with me. I will make your excuses to the owner of it: he has already been here to denounce you.’ ‘So,’ said old Templeman, finishing his story, ‘*Solvuntur risu tabulæ* ;’ which means, I take it,” concluded Mr. Smith, “each man had his own watch again.”

“What a capital story!” says Nora Atkins.

“Se non è vero, è ben trovato,” rejoins her mother.

“Oh, but it really is true; or, at all events, it has been told as a true story in Rome for the last thirty years at least,” says Miss Alderney.

“Yes, and we are particularly obliged to Mr. Smith for his judicious interpretation. *Solvuntur risu tabulæ*—Every man has his own watch again! Exactly so. Never omit to add that conclusion to the story, Mr. Smith. It is the gem of the anecdote,” says the Rev. Athanasius dryly.

“Here come the rest of our friends, I think,” says Mrs. Atkins as another carriage drives up. “Mr. Smith, will you kindly see if the *custode* is there?”

The *custode* makes his appearance, accom-

panied by an attendant bearing a lot of huge torches; and the party prepare to ascend to the upper corridors of the ruined structure. And then follows a little game at that finessing which usually occurs on such occasions, and the object of which is the arrangement of the party into couples in such sort that, as far as may be possible, affinities and their opposites shall not be too violently shocked.

The Rev. Athanasius Abbott, by right of his recognized honorary ciceroneship, and by virtue of his admittedly superior knowledge of the place and its history, conceives himself to have a sort of right of first choice, and is about to exercise it in favour of Miss Marian Atkins, showing himself thereby false alike to the demands of friendship and the ties of common convictions and principles. For was not Miss Marguerite looking forward to the privilege of having his arm? But the American artist—we will call him Mr. Julian Alford, or rather “Julian Alford,” without any *Mister*, for he is one of those men who are always called by their christened and surname by all the society in which they live, when his friends do not call him simply “Julian”—dexterously cuts him out by his quickness in reaching Marian’s side

and presenting an arm, which is as quickly accepted. The reverend cicerone, therefore, concealing his disappointment as cleverly as he can, falls back on community of sentiment and friendship and devotes himself to Miss Marguerite Tomkynnes. There is a moment of frightful danger for poor Nora Atkins, who sees herself exposed to the alarming chance of a whole evening's *tête-à-tête*, or what is nearly equivalent to that, with Mr. Reginald Courtney Smith; from which a twofold evil would have resulted. Both for Nora, who would have had the cheerful little man's arm, and for Lucie Tomkynnes, who would not have had him, the evening would have been spoiled. But Nora is equal to the occasion. There is a certain young German professor who has recently arrived in Rome, charged, as is understood, with some commission by his government to collect archæological information on some special subject, and who had been acquainted with the Atkinses at Dresden. He has been invited by Mrs. Atkins to join the party, and is quite a stranger to all the others assembled. Now, among her other accomplishments, Nora Atkins speaks German with perfect fluency, and at the very moment when she is on the point of falling

a prey to Mr. R. C. Smith she calls to her German friend, "You must give me your arm, Herr Doppelstaub. I am sure you know more about the Coliseum than anybody in Rome, though you have never seen it before. You would not be a true German if you did not."

So Professor Doppelstaub and Lucie Tomkynnes are both made happy. Mr. Smith very easily consoles himself for his disappointment, and Nora has the advantage of a companion who in sober earnest does really know more of the history of the ruin they are visiting than anybody else there.

As for Miss Marie Tomkynnes, she has already taken possession of the *custode*, and has in five minutes reduced him to a state of imbecile despair by the energy and the multiplicity of her cross-questions.

Mrs. Atkins, Mrs. Tomkynnes, and Miss Alderney are attended by old Colonel Hallery, an Englishman, a thorough gentleman and a perfect good fellow, who knows everybody in Rome, and whose mania it is to affect to remember everything during Heaven knows how many tens of years past, and to have been as well acquainted with everybody's father and mother and uncles and aunts as he is with

themselves. Everybody laughs at Colonel Hallery, and everybody likes him. He is an old bachelor, and is upon the present occasion accompanied by a cousin of his, Captain Danby of the navy, who is also an old bachelor, and has come to Rome to pass the winter with his cousin. Colonel Hallery knows all about Miss Alderney's people; is equally aware that the dear deceased partner of the early life of Mrs. Lespinasse Tomkynnes was John Tomkins, drysalter; and with the smallest amount of encouragement would declare that he perfectly remembered Mrs. Atkins's ancestor going out in the *May-flower*, and indeed, was the last to shake hands with him on the quay before he embarked. Miss Alderney peremptorily requires that a man with a torch shall walk on each side of her, and thus arranged the party proceed to ascend to the upper portions of the ruin.

Much has been done to render this ascent safe and tolerably commodious. But some care is required by moonlight visitors to avoid accidents which might easily be serious. The often misleading light of the torches, and the extraordinary and constantly recurring contrasts between the entire darkness of the completely covered



parts of the corridors and the brilliancy of the moonlight in every part of the huge pile exposed to it, puzzle the eyes and unfit them to be perfectly trustworthy guides. The stairs, which are all of recent construction, are safely protected from all danger save such as might arise from bumping one's head against a more solid brick vault here and there than most heads would like to encounter. But there are open fragments of exposed platform on the upper floors utterly devoid of any sort of protection, where a false step would infallibly be—and in more than one recent case has been—fatal. And then there are exquisitely picturesque little fringes of flowering weeds growing on the extreme edges of these treacherous esplanades, and young ladies are apt to covet specimens of such blossoms, to be treasured as memorials of the visit; and young gentlemen, eager to anticipate each other in procuring these objects, are apt to be more ambitious of exhibiting carelessness than caution. Then, again, the torchbearers naturally group themselves about what may be called the “general staff” of the party, where the elders and chaperons cluster together and debate the pros and cons between the picturesque and the rheumatic.

And then the long circular distances of arched corridor, checkered with patches of alternate ebon and ivory, stretching away out of sight of the torches and of those gathered around them, are exceedingly tempting; and it is felt to be very desirable to take the advice Walter Scott gives as to Melrose, so far as to decide that if to visit the Coliseum "aright" it is not absolutely necessary to "go alone," yet it should be enjoyed in "solitude *à deux*." There are many flights of stairs to be mounted, and chaperons and old maids and older colonels move slowly over steep, half-lit steps. Young maids trip where old maids stumble, and it is a sort of triumph to conduct the precious charge on your arm to the topmost tiers of the giddy height of wall while the others of the party are still making their slow way far below. But such triumphs are really not without danger, especially to the uninitiated and inexperienced. Julian Alford is certainly not one of these, however. He has made one in many a moonlight excursion to the Coliseum, has made drawings of it by daylight from every spot of vantage, and is almost as well acquainted with every part of the fabric as the *custode* himself. He and Marian Atkins reached the topmost accessible part of

the building in safety, and there stand under the shadow of the highest remaining bit of wall, to the top of which there is no possibility of climbing, gazing out on the huge masses and the central area all bathed in a flood of silver light. Beyond, they can see the enormous shapeless masses of ruined structures which cover the side of the Palatine Hill, and the beautiful Arch of Constantine, and on their left the church and monastery of St. Gregory on their hill.

“What shall I offer you for your thoughts, Miss Atkins?” says Alford, after they have remained gazing in silence, as if by mutual consent, for a minute or two.

“You had better offer nothing, for they are worth nothing, being very much the worse for wear, and just what everybody else, I should imagine, has thought when looking from this spot at what we are looking at. I was thinking of all the long phantasmagoria of sights these old walls have seen since the hideous tyranny of man’s will over suffering thousands of his fellows first called them into being; and how little—*very* little—of good the whole story has in it. And then I was thinking—and *that* line of speculation, I suppose, is shared only by our

own countrymen—how far it was an advantage and how far a disadvantage to America to possess no such past and no such memorials of it.”

“No *such* past! Surely there can be no room for doubt about it. It is *that* past, fully as much as any more recent past, that has made these people what we see them. Would you wish to be the countrywoman of such?” says Alford quietly.

“No indeed! Nor would I sell my birth-right for such a mess of pottage, though the conditions of sale were to place a Coliseum in every city from Maine to Georgia. But I confess that I am sometimes tempted to regret the absence in our country of things that, while they act as a connecting link between the present and the past, form as it were a perpetual school for the perception and appreciation of mere beauty as dissociated from any ideas of the profitable and the useful.”

“Yes. And an artist should be the last to fail in perceiving and acknowledging the value of such memorials; but surely they may cost a people too much. Here come our reverend High Churchman and Miss Tomkynnes. Sure such a pair was never seen—so justly formed to meet by Nature,” adds the young man in a lower

tone as the heads of the couple in question are perceived emerging from the opening in the vault through which the stair passes.

“And there come Nora and her professor. I have no doubt Nora is well up by this time in all the history of the Coliseum from its foundation to the present day,” says Marian Atkins; “and look,” she continues, pointing down to a terrace of the building far below the spot on which she and Alford are standing, “there are mamma and Mrs. Tomkynnes and Miss Alderney down there. They seem to have given up the idea of climbing any higher. Perhaps they can see as much there as we can see here. At all events, I don’t think they mean to come up.”

“I suppose not. Youth is the time for ambition, Miss Atkins,” returns the young painter. “As far as seeing the Coliseum goes, I think the view from where they stand is as good or better than that from here; but they do not get all the lovely view beyond which we are enjoying,” he goes on, pointing as he speaks with outstretched arm toward the varied ruins on the Palatine, the Arch of Constantine, and the church-crowned hill beyond it. “But, hallo! What have we now? Look down there!” he exclaims, pointing to the ground in the interior

of the building, just as the others of the party, with Miss Marie Tomkynnes still in possession of the *custode*, come toward them.

The attention of all of them is attracted to a sort of procession which is seen entering the area from under the dark archway far below. The figures which compose it are invisible in the darkness, but become more distinctly clear in the moonlight as they emerge from it into the central space. Two men, apparently servants, walk first; then come a couple of priests in their cassocks and large ecclesiastical cloaks; and these are followed by an old and venerable-looking man, whom the red band on his broad triangular hat and the large gold cross shining conspicuously on his breast show to be a bishop. Two other priests and two more attendants follow him; and behind them troop a motley throng of some twenty or thirty individuals, mostly of the "street-Arab" class. The bishop and his attendant priests walk slowly and with mournful step, and with their heads bowed down on their breasts, with the air of men oppressed by the most profound grief. Slowly the little procession advances to the exact centre of the area—to the spot from which the huge crucifix which had stood there for so many cen-



turies has recently been removed. There they all kneel down on the bare earth, and so remain in silent prayer apparently for some minutes. Then the bishop rises, and all the rest follow his example, while one of the attendants draws forth what appears to be a large handkerchief and spreads it on the ground. The bishop draws himself up to his full height—he is a tall, gaunt-looking old man—and raising his eyes and face, which the party above can see gleaming white in the moonlight, to heaven, and stretching out both his arms to their full extent, seems to be speaking in an impassioned manner. Of course his words and even the faintest sound of them, are inaudible at the height above him at which our friends are standing, but from the papers on the following day, which were all more or less full of the singular scene of which they chanced to be witnesses, they learned that he was a French bishop, and that his words had been a violent denunciation of the “usurping” government which, in the pride of its triumphant impiety, had dared to desecrate that venerated scene of so many Christian martyrdoms by the removal of the sacred symbol which had so long hallowed the spot in the eyes of all the nations of the earth.

His attendants and companions meantime stand around with bowed heads and faces bent toward the ground, while the outer circle, composed of the ragamuffins who had followed them, begins to show signs of a disposition to become turbulent. The bishop, having brought his tirade to a conclusion, once more bends down and with his own reverend hands begins scraping together a quantity of earth from the spot where the cross had stood, and shovelling it into the handkerchief. Having thus secured this portion of the holy soil which has, as he pictures to himself, been moistened by the blood and mixed with the ashes of uncounted martyrs to the faith—though in fact many a foot of rubbish and dust and decayed vegetable matter must have long since covered with a less hallowed stratum the ground his imagination makes venerable to him—he again raises himself, and is evidently about to begin a new oration, when a police agent with a couple of followers steps up to him and is unmistakably intimating to him to depart.

What is said on either side is, as has been hinted, inaudible to our friends. But they learned on the morrow that the police agent had told the right reverend prelate that he must

quit the Coliseum. "What!" says he, speaking in French, which the police agent is perfectly well able to understand—probably he has been selected and sent there for the express purpose—"what! is the Coliseum open to every idle visitor who chooses to make it a lounging-place, and forbidden only to those who come to pray? Is it not enough to have desecrated—"

"It will be better that you go home quietly, monsignore," rejoins the police agent civilly.

"I am forbidden, then, to pray?"

"Not forbidden to pray, your reverence, but forbidden to make a disturbance. Look at these people who have followed you! We shall have something disagreeable if you continue here. You must leave the building."

So the bishop, protesting, denouncing, and very angry, but carrying his handkerchief full of sacred earth with him, retires.

The incident was much canvassed by the Roman press, and commented on by either side from the different points of view of each in a manner which may be readily imagined. And of course the scene they have witnessed, and which is characteristic enough of one of the special phases of Roman life as it is at the present day, is talked over by our friends as

they go home to supper at the hospitable table of Mrs. Atkins, with differences of opinion and feeling, which reproduce with tolerable accuracy the prejudices and principles which are dividing the world around them.

“Upon my word, things are come to a strange pass,” says the Rev. Athanasius Abbott, “when not only are the symbols of the faith abolished, but it is forbidden to pray on the sites where they stood!”

“Braying!” says Professor Doppelstaub in an undertone to Miss Nora: “it may be French braying, but it seemed a great deal more like what we call cursing in Germany.”

“It must have been a severe disappointment to the right reverend gentleman not to have a single stone thrown at him,” remarks Julian Alford.

“Disappointment *not* to be stoned! What *do* you mean?” says Miss Marian.

“Of course it was a disappointment. If he could only have had an eye or a tooth knocked out with a stone, it would have suited his book exactly. There would have been some hope then that something might have been accomplished toward setting the Italian and the French Governments by the ears. That is

what our friend with the big gold cross yonder would like well enough to be willing to pay for it by having a stone in his eye. But the Italians are too wide awake to give him the chance," rejoins Alford.

"I do hope, for my part, that the French government will take the matter up," says Miss Marguerite Tomkynnes. "I shall have an opportunity of speaking to the French Minister at the princess's to-morrow night, and shall certainly make a point of calling his attention to the subject," adds the lady with a very magnificently diplomatic air.

"You may depend upon it, Miss Tomkynnes, that he knows all about it already, and regrets the escape of his friend the bishop from stoning just as much as the reverend gentleman himself does. All these things are planned and canvassed, believe me," says Julian Alford.

"Well, people may feel differently, but I declare, for my part, that I found the attitude and the object of that venerable old man perfectly touching," remarks the Rev. Mr. Abbott. "I regretted that I was not down in the area of the building, so that I might have placed myself at his side."

"That was just my own feeling," exclaims

Miss Marguerite gushingly. "Could we have got down, the noble old man would at least have felt that his sublime faith did not lack the sympathy of congenial spirits."

"I'll undertake to get a lot of the dirt for you, Miss Marguerite, from the very place where he was scraping it up, if it will give you any pleasure," says the gallant R. C. Smith: "I should like to see the police prevent me!" added the heroic youth with a genuinely British contempt for all such officials off his own soil.

Miss Marguerite makes no answer to this chivalrous proposition, but Mrs. Atkins quietly says, "You are not a bishop, you know, and I dare say Miss Marguerite's relations with the diplomatic world of the Vatican will enable her to procure a portion of the soil carried off by the gentleman with the gold cross on his breast, as Julian Alford calls him."

There is no unkindness in quizzing Marguerite Tomkynnes, for she never by any chance understands it.

"I'll say this much, at all events, for his reverence," rejoins Alford—"that he made an extremely picturesque and effective picture. I think I will make a sketch of him as he stood there denouncing 'the powers that be.' Shall



I introduce you, Miss Marguerite, by his side?—a kneeling figure, you know, with a fragment of marble for a fald-stool, arms outstretched, head thrown back, hair dishevelled? It would be very effective.”

Marguerite would much like to close with this proposition at once, but Miss Alderney interrupts with, “And I’ll be put in as a Christian martyr—to the rheumatism, as we all shall be if we stand about here any longer.”

So they get into the carriages which are waiting, and over Mrs. Atkins’ well-spread supper-table the moonlight visit to the Coliseum is voted to have been a great success.

## CHAPTER IV.

## ON THE TIVOLI ROAD.

A FEW days subsequently to the highly successful moonlight excursion to the Coliseum, which has just been described, most of the persons who had composed that pleasant party, together with some others—chiefly Americans and English—were assembled in the apartment of Mrs. Atkins. It was a Friday, and, as all Rome knows, Friday is Mrs. Atkins' "day." That is to say, on every Friday throughout the season, from three to six in the afternoon, that lady throws open her rooms for the reception of visitors, and, together with her charming daughters, undertakes to be at home to welcome them. The advantage of this popular arrangement is twofold. It enables and authorizes the mistress of the family to decline receiving any morning visitors on the other six days of the week; and it insures the finding of her at

home on the day named. It has also many other advantages for the crowd of visitors who are passing the season at Rome, and who have nothing to do from morning till night save to amuse themselves. Three hours, or as large a portion of them as can be devoted to one and the same house, are provided for— inestimable boon! There are also tea, cakes, and a crowd provided for their enjoyment. Everybody meets their acquaintances. And, as is pre-eminently the case at the popular house of Mrs. Atkins, you have a charming hostess, and her two still more charming daughters, to welcome and do the agreeable to you. This latter feature is understood, indeed, to be so essential a one for the successful holding of one of these weekly levées, that those ladies who have no daughters of an age to play the required part, borrow them for the occasion from those neighbours who have. It is a peculiar arrangement; evidently due in the first instance to the bold initiative of some original mind; the rapidly spread imitation of which attests its advantages. The young lady, or ladies, go to “help Mrs. So-and-so to receive.” The duty thus assumed cannot be considered altogether a sinecure. Such a vice-mistress of

the house must know everybody, and be ready to talk to everybody. She must *pro hac vice* lay aside all her own preferences, and make no more difference between the most inveterate bore of an old foggy and the most specially favoured partner of last night's ball, than Dido did between Trojan and Tyrian. She must pour out the tea with the untiring perseverance of a Danaid, and must distribute cakes, and still sweeter smiles and pleasant words, to all comers. The institution, it will be seen, is altogether and unmistakably to the advantage of the male creatures, whose comforts are thus catered for. Nobody ever borrows a young gentleman to help her to receive her friends!

Mrs. Atkins has no need, as we are aware, to be a borrower after this fashion, though she is frequently a lender; for Marian and Nora Atkins are very popular girls. And the Fridays of Mrs. Atkins are among the most popular "days" observed by the Roman foreign society.

It is nearly six o'clock, and for half an hour past has been so dark that the servants have brought lamps into the room; but the last of the crowd has only just taken his leave, and Mrs. Atkins and the girls are tired to death with

their three hours' hard work. Nevertheless, it is not without a sense of triumph that they proceed to reckon up, as far as memory will serve, the roll of their visitors, much as tired sportsmen at the end of a long day make up their bag. It is not accurately correct, however, to say that the last of the visitors has taken his departure; for Julian Alford, the young painter, is lingering yet a few minutes. But he is a privileged person, and the domestic conversation goes on before him just as freely as if he were one of the family.

"Upon my word, I think that Rome gets fuller and fuller every year!" says Nora Atkins, throwing herself into an easy-chair; "you will have to get larger rooms, mamma, if things go on in this way! The people could hardly move in the room to-day!"

"You accept it then, as a law of Nature, that Mrs. Atkins must under all circumstances provide tea and cake every Friday for all the foreigners in Rome!" says Julian Alford. "If the great Mr. Cook were to arrive with a caravan of fifty followers, I suppose they would all be brought here, and the enterprising leader would put 'comprising tea at Mrs. Atkins's' into his next advertisement.

“Not *quite* that, I hope, Julian!” replies Mrs. Atkins, suppressing a yawn; “but, I don’t know how it is, somehow or other one gets to know everybody; and I confess I like to see the people.”

“I don’t know whether it is a law of Nature, as Julian says, any more than I know who or what it is that makes half the laws we find ourselves obeying,” returned Nora; “but I am inclined to think that the Cook caravan would all have to come, if that great man chose them to do so.”

“Well, my dear, in all things one must take the good with the bad, you know,” says Mrs. Atkins, with a placid sigh.

“But that is just the question. Must one do so?” rejoined the young artist; the real fact being that his philosophy on the subject was inspired by Marian’s look of fatigue, and by the remembrance of a rather undue share of her attention which he had seen the Rev. Athanasius Abbott monopolizing at the tea-table.

Alford has been standing with his hat in his hand while the foregoing sentences were being exchanged, and now puts out his hand to Mrs. Atkins to take his leave. “I wanted,” he says as he does so, “to propose a picnic



scheme, which I think the weather is now fine enough for, but I am sure you are too tired to listen with any favour to such a proposal now. May I come and talk it over to-morrow morning?"

"A picnic! It will be the first of the season! How delightful! There is nothing I like so much as a good picnic! But do stay and tell us all about it now! I am not a bit tired . . . if mamma is not too tired to hear us talk," adds Marian, brightening up, and looking at her mother.

"Not at all too tired, my dear, even to take part in the talk myself! Sit down again, Julian, and bring your motion before the house. Dinner will not be ready for half an hour yet," says Mrs. Atkins; and Alford needs no further pressing.

"If I am not mistaken," he continues, sitting down again, "you have never had a picnic at the most enticing place for the sort of thing anywhere round Rome—the Villa Adriana. I don't pretend to know what are the elements needed to constitute what Miss Marian calls a *good* picnic; but as far as the *locale* is concerned, I do not think that all the world could furnish you with a better."

“Mr. Alford knows just as well as anybody, and better than many people, what makes a *good* picnic,” says Marian with pretended pique.

“But we have seen the Villa Adriana, if we did not picnic there. We took it on our way to Tivoli,” observes Nora.

“Seen it! You have seen nothing of it! I know the place well; and you must permit me to assure you that such a visit as you speak of, taking it, as you say, on the way to Tivoli, can show you nothing of the place, or at all events, cannot enable you to enjoy it,” rejoins the artist.

“It is quite true. There can be no enjoyment in being driven through even Paradise itself in the way we were hurried on that day we went to Tivoli!” observes Mrs. Atkins.

“No; to be sure not. I know all about it! I know how the thing is done! I have seen people at it by the dozens! Can we *do* Tivoli in the day, so as to be back to Rome in time for dinner? That is the question asked. And the guides, and the carriage proprietors, and the innkeepers, and the donkey-boys have decided that the answer is to be in the affirmative; Tivoli can be done in the day, including the Villa Adriana! You put yourself under an

experienced tourist-driver—the feat is accomplished; you get back to a seven or eight o'clock dinner in Rome, and add Tivoli and its accessories to the list of your *doings*. The Villa Adriana, the terrestrial paradise which the Emperor Hadrian constructed for himself, striving to accumulate within its ten miles of circumference all that the world possessed of rare and beautiful—the most remarkable and interesting remnant of the old classical life that has remained to us—is ‘taken’ on the way to something else, as Miss Nora has said—is crammed into a day already far too crowded, and the victims to sight-seeing rush through it like heated, over-driven cattle, and then say that they have *done* it!”

“Ha! ha! ha!” laughed Mrs. Atkins; “bravo, Julian! I never remember your coming down on the Philistines so fiercely before!”

“I protest it’s all true, every word of it! I remember well our day at Tivoli; and we were Philistines of the Philistines for our pains,” says Marian; “but what,” she adds eagerly, “were you saying about ten miles in circumference? A villa ten miles in circumference! The idea takes one’s breath away!”

"*Il y a de quoi!*" returns Alford; "such was simply the case! But then, you know, the Emperor had assembled within his walls a sort of specimen museum of the entire world. There were theatres of all sorts, a Vale of Tempe, a Tartarus, an Elysian Field, libraries, barracks, I don't know how many temples to all sorts of gods, Roman and foreign, all which you may read in the guide-books at your leisure. The fact is, that whether as a mere assemblage of landscape beauties, or as a means of enabling the imagination to form some picture of the highest luxury which the old civilization had to offer, the Villa Adriana is one of the spots best worth *seeing*, not scampering over, in all the world."

"But we are wandering away from the picnic! The picnic's the thing! Tell us what you were going to propose?" says Nora.

"Simply that we should give the whole of a long day to the Villa; not go to Tivoli at all—drive direct to the Villa, let the horses go up the hill to be stabled at the town, and come down for us at sunset, for a drive home by moonlight. And a picnic it must be perforce, unless you would like to fast from sunrise to the going down of the same, for there is nothing in

the way of food to be had there. There is the home of the farmer and superintendent, where fire and facilities for making coffee may be had . . . unless, indeed, you would think it more amusing and picturesque to make our own fire, gipsy-fashion, and . . . and how charming Miss Marian would look in a scarlet hood!"

Thus Julian Alford, artist *quand même*.

"But bending over a cauldron, not a coffee-pot! I bargain for a cauldron!" returned Marian, laughing.

"But I bargain for the coffee-pot, cauldron or no cauldron," puts in her mother.

"I like the idea immensely! Oh, the picnic by all means! But now comes the grand question in all picnics—which may perhaps lead Mr. Alford to the perception of what Marian means when she talks about a 'good' picnic—the question who we shall have?" said Nora.

"Oh, I think 'the more the merrier' is a good rule in a case like this! We have ten miles in circumference to spread incompatibilities over," says Alford.

"Well, I am not so sure of the goodness of your rule," says Marian somewhat doubtfully.

"Of course we must have Mr. Abbott! He is always such an excellent cicerone!" says Nora,

with a rather wicked glance at the young artist.

“Why Abbott before all the world? There are people who know quite as much about the Villa Adriana as Abbott does! Not that *I* have any objection to him—not the least in the world! Of course Miss Norar Ratkins will have no objection to asking Mr. Reginald Courtney Smith to join us—he is such an admirably appreciative lover of the beauties of nature,” says Alford.

“Have Mr. Smith, by all means!” returns Nora; “with Lucie Tomkynnes for a *paratonnerre* I shan’t be afraid of the lightning descending upon me!”

“Do you know, good people, that I doubt whether you are making your selection upon the wisest principle,” says wise and clever Mrs. Atkins; “don’t let us attempt to re-enact the old *précieuse* rule—‘*Nul n’aura de l’esprit hors nous et nos amis!*’ Don’t let us be too exclusive. I think we ought to let all our party of the other night join us, if they feel disposed to do so. Take a pencil, Nora, and scribble a list of the names.”

Nora took a pencil and prepared to act as secretary, while her mother proceeded to re-



capitulate the members of the moonlight party to the Coliseum.

“Mrs. Tomkynnes and her three daughters.”

“Mrs. Lespinasse Tomkynnes, if you please, ma’am!” corrects Alford; “but is not that rather an overpowering dose of one ingredient! Shall not we be over-weighted with such an avalanche of excruciating gentility and superfine ultramontaniam?”

“My dear sir, what can you do when a mother has three daughters? Besides, probably Miss Marie will not show us the light of her countenance!” says Mrs. Atkins.

“Oh, yes; the Tomkynneses, of course! They are good-natured girls enough. And, for my part, I hope Marie will come—there is no better fun than Marie Tomkynnes!” says Marian.

“Well, mamma; I have put them down. Who next?” says Nora, uplifted pencil in hand.

“Miss Alderney and her old friend Colonel Hallery,” continued Mrs. Atkins.

“Now, mamma! I declare it’s too bad to pair off people in that unauthorized way!” says Marian. “What *would* Miss Alderney say if she heard you?”

“She would probably say, my dear, that it

was a very proper attention to provide her with a walking stick, which she can use or not at any moment she may choose," returned her mother.

"But what would Colonel Hallery say to the arrangement?" asks Julian Alford.

"Oh, the colonel would in all probability declare that he perfectly well remembered dancing with her grandmother at the court of George the Third, and would be charmed to make himself useful."

"Very well! Miss Alderney and Colonel Hallery; and of course his cousin Major Danby. I don't like him quite so well, though, as our old friend the colonel. But we are getting on very slowly with our list," says Nora; "don't let us have any more discussion, mamma; you tell me the names and I will write them down."

"I think we have named pretty nearly all our party of the other night. We must not forget our Dresden friend though, Herr Doppelstaub," says Mrs. Atkins.

And Herr Doppelstaub was voted for by acclamation.

"And now shall we ask anybody else?" says Nora, with pencil still in hand.

"Let us see! We are three, four Tom-

kynneses, and Miss Alderney ;—that makes eight ladies ; and of gentlemen we have Alford, Mr. Abbott, Mr. Smith, the Colonel and his cousin, and Herr Doppelstaub ;—only six. I suppose we ought to have a couple more gentlemen—eh, girls ?” says Mrs. Atkins.

“ Oh ! I don’t know ! Who is there, that we should be the better for ? ” says Marian.

Nora gives her a laughing glance with the tail of her eye, the full meaning and translation of which perhaps might be interpreted into, “ Yes, my dear ; we know that you are quite sufficiently provided with the article in question ; but perhaps there might be a more extensive demand on the part of some others.”

“ Well, I’ll tell you who I should like to ask,” says Mrs. Atkins,—“ that young Anderson, who came to Rome just before Christmas. I should like to see something more of him, for I knew his mother very well long years ago in Baltimore. Susie Malling and I were great friends before we were either of us married,” said Mrs. Atkins with a sigh, as her mind goes back to all that had happened and to the sundering of old friendships since those old times. Have you made acquaintance with him, Alford ?—you generally know everybody.

“Oh yes! I have seen him more or less. He is like Nimrod, a mighty hunter! He always leads the field. They say that he is awfully rich,” returns Alford.

“I suppose he must be. His father and his uncle were both wealthy men, and he has inherited all that both of them had to leave. But no doubt their property suffered in the war,” returns Mrs. Atkins.

“And he has been educated at Oxford, has he not?” asks Nora; “I heard somebody saying so.”

“Yes, he has only just left the university. At his father’s death—having lost his mother, my old friend, years before—he became his uncle’s ward. And Mr. Jonas Anderson’s wife was an Englishwoman, and he had resided many years in Liverpool, and had many English connections and friends. And so it came to pass that the young man was sent to Oxford; and very shortly afterwards his uncle died. And now I suppose he will be going home to take possession of his property.”

“Let us have Mr. Anderson by all means!” says Nora, adding his name to her list. “I like a man who leads the field; and I am curious to see what an Oxford man is like. By all means let us have Mr. Anderson!”

“If we can get him!” says her mother.

“Oh! No fear of that! He’ll jump at the chance—I’ll answer for him! I am not sure that I shall like him any the better for his Oxford education!” says Alford, not much disposed apparently to welcome the new comer to the little party with open arms.

“Nor am I sure; but it may be that I shall,” says Mrs. Atkins quietly. “And now girls, that makes seven gentlemen to our eight ladies. Who shall be the eighth lord of creation to make us perfectly symmetrical?”

“Will you let me bring a friend of mine?” says Alford—“I think you must have met him, though he does not go much into society;—Walter Weston. He is not portentously rich, being a poor sculptor; and he has not been educated at Oxford; but he is a right good fellow, and a gentleman.”

“Yes; I remember meeting him at the Farrants’. He seemed a very quiet and shy young man, I remember, but very pleasing in appearance,” observes Marian.

“Yes! And I’ll tell you what he has;—he has as charming a tenor voice as you ever heard, and can sing at sight anything you put before him. Would it not be nice to have some sing-

ing among the ruins before we start homewards?" pleads Alford.

"Oh! Delightful!" cried both the girls at once. "Oh, mamma, let us have Mr. Weston by all means! There, I have put his name down! And now our party is quite symmetrical, as mamma says," adds Nora.

"And now for the when?" says Marian.

"With this weather, I should say the sooner the better!" remarks Alford.

"With all my heart! I suppose one clear day will be enough for getting together our company and making our preparations," says Mrs. Atkins, who is, to tell the truth, always as ready for a frolic as her daughters. "Let us say Monday: that will give us two days for our invitations."

"And now how about the carriages? How shall we arrange ourselves?" cries Nora.

"Alford can come with us, and there will be a place for Herr Doppelstaub on the box, if he will accept of it. That will be five. No doubt the Tomkynneses will give Mr. Abbott a seat on their carriage. That will make ten," counts Mrs. Atkins.

"Anderson will drive his own trap, of course; and I dare say he will offer my friend Weston the place by his side," says Alford.



"That makes twelve provided for," says Nora.

"Then little Smith will doubtless be fired by emulation, and drive himself out too. You know the little man claims to be great in all horsey matters," remarks Alford.

"But who is to go with him? We can't expect him to drive himself out alone in solitary dignity," says Mrs. Atkins.

"Really I don't see what we can do for him in that respect . . . unless, indeed, Miss Norar Ratkins could be induced to share his vehicle," returns Alford, with a laughing glance at that young lady.

"Thank you, Mr. Alford! Miss Norar-r-r R-r-ratkins is not disposed to do anything of the kind!" said Nora, with a mock-grave courtesy. "But if you are benevolently disposed, you can comfort the solitude of Mr. Smith yourself."

"Christian charity is a beautiful thing; but, like other matters, has bounds. I decline to sacrifice in Mr. Smith's behalf the offer that has already been made to me. No! I'll tell how it must be! We must make him take that smart little round-about officer in her British Majesty's Service, Major Danby; and then the

old colonel can go *tête-à-tête* with Miss Alderney in her brougham. Never say that I am not great as an administrator and tactician!" cries Alford.

"You show yourself very great! Only don't you think that we are disposing of our friends in a somewhat Napoleonic spirit?" says Mrs. Atkins, looking up with a smile.

"I am sure we are exercising a very paternal despotism. But don't you know how many people there are who are glad to be told what to do, if it is what is not particularly disagreeable to them. I will guarantee that all our *convives* will fall into the arrangements we have made for them with the utmost alacrity. You will see that I am right," says the young painter, who, to say the truth, is one of those persons who seem to have the gift of making people and things go the way they would have them, while the persons so controlled think all the time that they are acting on the suggestions of their own wills, only it will sometimes happen that two specimens of this class of persons meet, like Greek to Greek, and then is apt to come such a tug as shows that they are not well adapted for shining in the same hemisphere.

"Will you, then, undertake in your capacity

of dictator to make the necessary arrangements with the young men? I will write a note to Mr. Anderson, of which perhaps you will have the goodness to be the bearer. I will write, too, to Mrs. Tomkynnes, and to Miss Alderney, and I will ask her if she can give the colonel a place in her carriage. Mrs. Tomkynnes and Miss Alderney and I will see to the commissariat."

Thus Mrs. Atkins—rising as she spoke to signify that the business was settled and the session at an end. A note of invitation was hastily scribbled to Mr. Anderson, not, we may be sure, without some reference to the old days when his mother and Mrs. Atkins had been cronies as girls; and Mr. Alford took his leave, promising to call and report progress the next afternoon.

Here, if the prayer of poor Nathaniel Lee, the mad poet, could be granted in our favour, and the gods would but "annihilate both space and time," we might doubtless get some insight into the characters of those members of the Anglo-American Roman colony, whom we purpose accompanying on their excursion to the Villa Adriana, by listening to the conversation of the Atkins family as they sate at dinner; and,

following them to the musical party to which they were engaged in the evening, we might ascertain how it came to pass that, before they returned home at night, they knew that all their invitations had been accepted; how the two mammas and Miss Alderney had sate in private council on the question of "the vivres;" and how all was arranged and promised well for the projected trip. But as the gods will do nothing of the kind for us, we must content ourselves with briefly stating that, despite some protestations on the part of late risers, which were summarily overruled by Julian Alford, it was finally settled that all the party with their respective vehicles should find themselves at the Porta di San Lorenzo at nine in the morning on the Monday.

The Monday morning came, as bright and delicious a spring morning as ever gilded the domes of the Eternal City, or flecked with capricious lights and shades the slopes of the Alban and the Sabine Hills. And what was far more rare and surprising, all the different component parts of the party were at the trysting place within a quarter of an hour of the time named for meeting. Miss Alderney's carriage was the first to arrive on the little open

space before the low-browed old Roman arch of the ancient gateway—low-browed, not because the Roman builders planned it so, but because the soil has risen almost up to the spring of the arch.

“Military time, my dear madam!” cries the colonel triumphantly, drawing his chronometer from his pocket as he speaks; “here we are to the minute! I never keep people waiting; . . . and don’t like to be kept waiting.”

He had hardly spoken when George Anderson drove up, with Walter Weston by his side on the box of a break, in which were a couple of servants, and a hamper which old hands at Roman picnics would have recognized at once as a dozen of champagne from Spillman’s. He had been by good fortune at the musical party on the Friday evening, and had there been introduced to Miss Alderney, who now made him acquainted with the colonel—who, of course, recollected his father perfectly well immediately. In another minute the Atkinses’ carriage drove up, with the three ladies and Julian Alford inside, and Herr Doppelstaub in a high state of good humour on the box, despite the difficulties of his position, occasioned by a huge basket between his legs and those of the coach-

man. But this inconvenience was very soon removed at the instance of Anderson.

“Would it not be better, Mrs. Atkins,” says he, “to put that awfully large basket into the drag; I brought it on purpose to take such things. But that is an awful big one! What *can* it contain, I wonder!—ladies’ ball dresses, I should have thought, only that I did not know you meant to have a dance. But here comes just such another!—all the ball dresses of the Miss Tomkynneses, no doubt. Well, there is plenty of room in the drag.”

“You have got the materials for your own toilette there in a sufficiently capacious hamper, I see!” says Miss Alderney.

And then the carriage of the Tomkynneses’ division drives up; and shortly afterwards, the party is completed by the appearance of Reginald Smith and the major, who have apparently already become intimate.

Some of the assembled party would, no doubt, have considered that a better arrangement might have been made with regard to the distribution of persons among the five vehicles in attendance. But it was difficult to propose a change then and there; and any hopes that might have been conceived with reference to



such matters had to be adjourned to the homeward drive in the evening. Mrs. Atkins prudently gives her driver a hint to allow the two young men to precede his carriage, and Mrs. Tomkynnes and Miss Alderney follow her example. So George Anderson in his break, and Reginald Smith in his hired trap, lead the way; and if the spirit of Jehu should, as is not improbable, enter into the two charioteers, no bones will be exposed to danger save the comparatively unimportant ones of those gentlemen themselves, and those of Walter Weston and the major. Off they go, at a pace that makes the custom-house officer at the gate look after them with a shake of the head; and the carriages of Mrs. Atkins, Mrs. Tomkynnes, and Miss Alderney follow at a more sober rate.

None of the roads leading from the gates of Rome are less pleasant for the first few miles than that which starts from the Porta di San Lorenzo. The carriageway is always covered with either a stratum some ten inches thick of dust or a similar amount of mud. Footpath there is none of any kind; the road runs between high walls, which entirely shut out the view over the Campagna; and, to complete the charms of the drive, it is always very much

thronged by carts, which, driven with the utter recklessness and want of skill peculiar to Roman carters, does not tend to make travelling pleasant for other charioteers. Soon, however, the Basilica of San Lorenzo is reached; and soon after that, matters begin to improve somewhat. Not that the drive is a pretty one for a considerable distance further. But there are, at all events, occasional peeps over the Campagna, and glimpses of the hills that bound it, which are always beautiful. At a distance of four miles from the city the Anio is crossed—the “*præceps Anio*” of Horace, the precipitous nature of which makes the cascades at Tivoli, which all the world goes to see. Its modern name is the Teverone.

“What!” exclaims Anderson, as he crosses the new bridge at a spanking trot; “is it that ditch that all the world has conspired to make famous for the last two thousand years?”

“Yes; that little ditch is the ‘*præceps Anio!*’” answers Walter Weston. “The notable thing is that these people should have somehow or other made their ditches more famous than the fine rivers of other folks, and their molehills more conspicuous than the mountains of other lands!”

“Teverone, they call it,” remarks Mr. Smith to his companion, as they follow over the bridge; “that means ‘big Tiber,’ you know; but that must be a mistake, I should say. You have no idea how stupid these people are, major!”

“Bless my soul!” responds the major.

“It does not give one the idea of a very headlong stream in this part of its course, does it?” says Nora Atkins, standing up in the carriage as it crossed the bridge, and holding on by the rail of the box, to get as good a view as she can of the course of the stream. “Who was it, Herr Doppelstaub, that destroyed the old bridge, and made this new one necessary?”

“Poth the crate destroyers of Europe destroyed it, Miss Nora; first Dotila, in the sixth century, and then the French, in 1849,” says Doppelstaub in reply. “You find the draces of poth of them all over Europe nearly; but the French have left their mark the teepest!”

“It is truly wonderful in travelling over Europe from north to south, and from east to west, how constantly the same statement meets you everywhere — the French burned that castle; the French ruined that church; the French dispersed that museum; the French

broke down that bridge; the French impoverished that once prosperous town. The evil they have done is ubiquitous," says Alford.

"And this is the classic stream your favourite Horace sung, Mr. Abbott!" exclaims Marguerite Tomkynnes with beautiful enthusiasm, as their carriage follows the preceding one. "How delightful it is, how truly elevating to the mind and taste, to trace the footsteps of the . . . of the classical poets, and visit the scenes that inspired them! To think that a Roman Emperor should have trodden these stones!"

"Well, not exactly *these* stones," objects the Rev. Athanasius Abbott. "This is a modern bridge; the ancient one, a little higher up the stream, was destroyed by the French in 1849."

"Ah, what crowds of recollections throng one's mind! What a storied soil it is! Here, then, those new Defenders of the Faith, those modern Crusaders, fought so gloriously for their religion and for the Holy Father! How great a debt of gratitude do we not owe them!" continues the gushing Marguerite, with a long etc., etc.

"Hum! haw! ah! The new bridge—new bridge! My dear lady, I remember the destruction of the old bridge as well as if it had

been yesterday," says Colonel Hallery, as he and Miss Alderney crossed it in their turn.

"Ay, indeed! that was in the sixth century, was it not?" replies Miss Alderney, as quietly as if he had spoken of something that had happened last week.

"I believe so, ma'am; I believe so," returns the colonel, as totally forgetting that he has said he remembered anything as another man would forget the most mechanically uttered expletive.

"The Anio," says Herr Dopplestaub, leaning back from the box to address the ladies in the carriage, as they drive on, and gradually find themselves in the more open country of the Campagna—"the Anio, mesdames, marked the ancient frontier which divided Latium from the country of the Sabines."

It may be feared that the ladies did not feel any very lively interest in the boundary-line between Latium and the Sabines. But it was unlucky for Herr Doppelstaub that, just as he spoke, one of those sudden sunbursts that so often, when wrestling with the cloudy skies of early spring, the Roman sun darts forth, to the sudden mottling of hill and plain and distant townlet with an exquisitely capricious patch-

work of indigo blue shade and golden light, bathed in an instant all the slopes of the Alban and Sabine Hills. For Marian, who was seated by her mother in the back of the carriage, cannot forbear exclaiming, "Oh! look, mamma! Nora, do turn round and look at that line of hills! Was ever anything so lovely?"

And poor Herr Doppelstaub's ancient topography is altogether lost in the chorus of admiration that ensued.

"Ah!" cries Alford, with a sigh, after gazing at the quickly changing lights and shadows in silence, "those are the effects that are the despair of a painter! Who is to put what you are now looking at on canvas?"

"Look at the deep, deep purple on that remarkably isolated conical hill, deepening into absolute black towards the top of it!" continues Marian: "even as I am speaking, the glory of colour is departing from it, as that dark cloud sails between it and the sun. What a singularly shaped hill!"

"That is the mountain of Palestrina, the ancient Præneste, that Horace celebrates with so much love," says Herr Doppelstaub, far too good-natured to resent the shipwreck of his former observation about the Latin and Sabine boundaries.



A little further on, the learned German does succeed in interesting his fair friends by pointing out to them a portion of the old Roman road with its original pavement of huge polygonal masses of stone fitted one to the other, in the manner which is still used in some of the more unaltered streets of Florence. This bit of pavement (the bit still seen on that part of the ancient road from Rome to Tibur, which the modern road follows) looks as if it were made for eternity; so utterly impossible does it seem to dislocate or use away even by the traffic of centuries the enormous blocks of which it consists.

“And is that really and undoubtedly the absolute pavement over which the Emperor Hadrian and Horace and Mecænas passed when they went from Rome to Tibur?” asks Nora eagerly.

“Assuredly it is. Does it look as if it were the work of a more recent day? But what a strange thing it is that you should be so interested by the sight of a few blocks of stone, without any beauty whatever, fitted together very rudely,” observes Alford.

“Are not you interested by seeing them?” asks Nora.

“Unquestionably. Certainly, I am — very interested and gratified. But how strange it is that I should be so!” rejoins the artist.

“It never struck me as strange before ; but it is so, when one comes to think of it,” admits Nora.

“It is certain that one does feel a great pleasure in absolutely coming into contact, as one may say, with the great men of an age so utterly gone and vanished, even by a medium of communication so unmeaning, and that tells so little, as a paving-stone,” muses Marian.

“Which of you gentlemen will undertake to explain for us a phenomenon which is the mainspring of so many of our pleasures at Rome?” she continues, addressing them both.

“Surely it is a fery zimple ding, Miss Marian!” answers Doppelstaub promptly: “dere is noting remaining from antiquity dat we may not learn someting from. Dese paving-stones are tocuments—historical tocuments!”

“But they are documents only for the learned,” returns Marian as promptly. “Why should I, who can piece out no historical facts from them, feel a pleasure in seeing them, directly I am assured that they have been there for two thousand years, and have served as a pavement for men whose names have been

familiar to me ever since I could read, and who yet have always seemed separated from me by such unbridgable abysses of time? You have not explained that Herr Doppelstaub?"

"And it is a very difficult thing to explain," puts in Alford. "I think," continues he, "that the universally recognized feeling we are speaking of is a singular indication of the close and inextricable binding up together of mind and matter. The most imaginative and least material minds, so to speak, are the most capable of enjoying the pleasure we are speaking of. And yet they are assisted in exercising their imagination by any, even the grossest, bit of matter that imagination can lay hold of and use as a stepping-stone across the abysses that Miss Marian speaks of."

"So that imagination soars the better for a paving-stone attached to its pinion!" says Mrs. Atkins.

"Even so. It can no more soar unweighted by matter, than our lungs can breathe in an absolute vacuum," retorts Alford.

"But I don't believe a word about the universality of the pleasure to be got out of seeing old paving-stones. Ask Mr. Reginald Smith what he thinks of it," says Nora.

There was a general laugh at Nora's little fling at her *bête noire*. And the discussion which was threatening, perhaps, to lead them somewhat out of their depths was chased by other objects of interest.

A little way further to the left of the road Alford pointed out a mass of ruins, which seemed by their extent to be almost like those of a small town. The remains, however, are only those of a medieval castle, once the residence of the lords of the Arcione family. In the early part of the fifteenth century this feudal castle became, as the guide-books tells us, a resort of brigands; in consequence of which it was reduced to its present condition by the people of Tivoli.

"It is curious how impossible it is, even for the most unpractised eye, to mistake medieval ruins for Roman," says Alford. "Without any closer examination than we are able to make of them from the carriage as we pass them at this distance, nobody would fail to see that those walls are the work, not of pagan Roman builders, but of medieval Christians."

"I don't care noting about dose mediefel ruins," says Herr Doppelstaub in a tone of very lofty contempt; "dey were only par-

parians who puilt them—mere parparians, ruffian parons.”

“Yes, ruffians enough, and barbarian enough, and very baronial, no doubt,” rejoins Alfred; “but for all that, I confess medieval remains have nearly as much interest for me as classical ones. They were Christians, those ruffian barons.”

“I should not have thought that there was much to be said for them on that score. And I did not know that your orthodoxy was so great as to make that so strong a band of sympathy between you and the ruffian barons,” says Marian.

“Well; I suppose, that for any direct effect their Christianity had on their mode of living, they might as well have been Hottentots. And I am not concerned to defend my own orthodoxy as the root of any sympathy with them,” returns Alford. “But I do feel that the fact of our both belonging to that vast social system, which Christianity has more indirectly, perhaps, than directly created, and which is so entirely different and separated from all else that has ever been in the world, makes them and all that they did and thought, their evil deeds as well as their better qualities, nearer to me and

my mind and my nature than the men of the former civilization can ever be. The fact is, I suppose, Miss Marian, that I am a Gothic-minded man."

"Ah, *mon cher*, dat is chust de boint! Is it not because you are Gothic by race, rather than because you are Christian by greed, that dose parparian parons seem nearer to your sympathies?" says Doppelstaub.

"Maybe it is. But now, ladies, you may look at something better worthy of your attention than my idiosyncrasies," cries Alford. They were just then topping the rising ground to which the road gradually ascends from the first bridge over the Anio, and from which it descends to the Ponte Lucano, where the same stream is again crossed. "Now look at the line of hills in front of us. Is it not a lovely point of view! There is Tivoli, clinging on to the slope of its hill, a little to the left; and, as you see it hence, nestling in olive groves. At the foot of the hill, just at the border of the plain, and a little to the right of us, is the spot to which we are bound. All you can see from here is that the growth of wood thereabouts seems to be richer and more varied than in any other part of the plain. You will see, when we are



there, that it is so to a degree which constitutes a very large part of the singular and special beauty of the place."

Nora and Marian, both standing up in the carriage, and linking themselves together to steady themselves, gazed long and in silence at the scene which was spread out before them.

"It is exquisitely beautiful!" said Marian, resuming her seat with a sigh, such as is often called forth by the looking at such beauty; it would be difficult to say why, unless it be from the latent feeling that among so much that is lovely we have no durable abiding place.

The country immediately around them begins, at the point of the road they have reached, to be of a more arid and less fertile description than that nearer Rome, through which they have been passing. The cause of this is the geological change which here occurs, the latter district being entirely volcanic, whereas they are now entering the region of the travertine—that famous stone of which in all ages the principal buildings of the Eternal City have been constructed. Presently, all of a sudden, as a whiff of wind blew across the road from the left hand, the three ladies simultaneously carry their handkerchiefs to their noses.

“Oh! what a dreadful smell,” cried Marian in dismay.

“Is it the malaria? It is perfectly sickening!” says Nora.

“Good gracious! what can it be?” inquires Mrs. Atkins.

“You will have passed it in a minute. It is the mephitic gas, which is evolved by the sulphur lakes which lie a short distance to the left of the road—not at all unwholesome, though, like many other wholesome things, very unpleasant. There is an establishment of baths close to the lakes,” explains Alford.

“Virgil speaks of the evil-smelling exhalation,” says Herr Doppelstaub; “the lakes were in his time buried deep in the recesses of a forest, and there the Tiburtine Sybil—Tibur, you know, was the old name of Tivoli—gave forth her oracles. It was, perhaps, the most venerated oracular shrine in all Italy, and people from far and wide came to consult the Sybil there.”

“I had no idea,” says Marian, as the carriage rolls on beyond the range of the effluvium, “that the connection between evil smells and sanctity had been of such ancient date.”

“It is lucky the Miss Tomkynneses and Mr. Abbott cannot overhear you,” observes Alford.

"But, Miss Marian," says Doppelstaub, "if the paving-stones just now so delighted you, because they were a material link between you and Horace, why are you insensible to the stimulus to the imagination furnished by smelling the same . . . nasty smell, which Horace must have often smelt?"

"I dispute the justice of your analogy, Herr Doppelstaub," says Marian.

"And I take leave to doubt whether Horace was often an inquirer or a worshipper at the shrine," says Alford.

"There! that is Roman, and no mistake!" cries Nora, as they now come within sight of a grand round tower, in very fine preservation, very much like that of Cæcilia Metella on the Appian Way, only somewhat smaller.

"Yes! it was the tomb of one M. Plotius Silvanus, and, as you remark, declares itself to be of ancient Roman workmanship as clearly as those ruins of Castel Arcioni declared themselves to belong to the Middle Ages," says Alford.

"The bridge, too, is Roman; or at least, two of the arches are," says Doppelstaub, as the carriage passes over the Ponte Lucano, which crosses the Anio close to the old Roman tower.

“The bridge and the tower together would make a charming sketch, if one could manage to get the Hill of Tivoli for a background,” cries the artist.

“Exquisite! Do make a sketch of it, Mr. Alford,” cries Marian.

“Should you like to have one?” asks Alford, looking into her face.

“I should prize such a memorial of our day very much,” returns Marian, with a bright blush; “but it is out of the question for you to think of making one to-day.”

“Possible and not possible are very elastic terms after all. *Nous verrons!*” says Alford.

And very shortly after that the carriage turns down a lane, which strikes off from the road to the right, and in a few minutes more draws up at a lofty iron gate, the entrance to the grounds of the Villa Adriana, which is now the property of the Italian Government.

Here the party find themselves reassembled in the course of a few minutes, amid the boasts of Anderson and Reginald Smith as to the number of minutes by which they had preceded the rest.

## CHAPTER V.

## THE VILLA ADRIANA.

THE merrily chattering party are assembled at the iron gates which give admittance into the grounds occupied by the ruins of the celebrated Imperial Villa, now the property of the Italian Government, having been recently purchased for the nation from the Braschi family. The carriages were admitted within the gates, and would have been permitted to stand near the house of the porter on the inside, had it been the intention of the party to take a rapid glance at the Villa, and then proceed to Tivoli, as is the usual practice. As our party proposed, on the contrary, to spend the entire day in the grounds of the Villa, it was necessary to send the carriages up the hill to Tivoli. This having been done, and the usual amount of manœuvring to

secure desired, and avoid undesired, companionships having taken place, successfully for the most part in those cases in which the respective parties agreed in their wishes, the entire party proceeded to walk towards the principal portions of the ruins between two rows of ancient cypresses, which form a magnificent avenue.

“If I had been Hadrian,” said Reginald Smith, “I would have chosen some less mournful sort of tree for my avenue.”

The laugh at Mr. Smith’s expense that followed this, gave rise to a discussion on the probable age of the trees in question ; and the hedge of cypresses at S. Dominico on the Hill of Fiesole, which is known to have existed in the time of Boccaccio, was referred to by Colonel Haller, who did not however, as might have been expected, declare that he remembered the planting of it. The cypresses at the Villa Adrian have not by any means, however, the appearance of being of so great an age as those on the road between Florence and Fiesole.

Advancing up the slight ascent that leads from the gate to the principal ruins, the party came first to a huge extent of very lofty and unbroken wall, which once formed the back of a long arcaded walk, and still encloses on one



side the vast level parallelogram, which is held to have been a parade ground, or Campus Martius. Here a cry of dismay and disappointment escaped from Julian Alford, the artist. For he had not been there since the ivy which used to cover the whole vast extent of the wall referred to, had been removed. When the celebrated Villa became the property of the nation, the management of it fell, together with that of all the Roman remains in the Eternal City, into the hands of the Cavaliere Rosa. And it is by his order that this wall, as well as almost the whole of the other portions of the ruins of the Imperial Villa, has been denuded of the beautifying garment with which Nature had supplied them. And great has been the outcry, and unceasing the discussion in Rome, which the measure has occasioned. Of course the contending parties—those who approve on the one hand, and those who condemn on the other—are represented by the archæologists on the one side and the artists on the other. The latter, as might be expected, carry the greater body of the general public with them, and the measure of indignation poured out on the devoted head of the learned and too zealous antiquary has been immense.

Herr Doppelstaub was all in favour of the

merciless destruction of the beautiful ivy—such a mass of it as is not often seen.

“Ma tear vellow,” urged he, in reply to Alford’s lamentations, “ve most dink a little of bosderity! De virst ding of all is to breserf de ruins.”

“But there is much reason to think that this ruthless stripping does not tend to preserve them,” replied Alford. “If you could have prevented the ivy from ever growing, you might have insured a longer existence to the old walls, though I am not sure even of that. But to tear down the growth of centuries, dragging out by the roots the fibres which have interpenetrated the stones in every direction, must surely be anything but a measure of conservation. And think of the beauty that has been destroyed!”

“Peauty is a fery goot ding, ma tear vellow,” rejoined the German; “put zience is a petter. Dese valls is tocuments — ’istorical tocuments . . .”

“Like the paving-stones, just now!” put in Alford.

“Chust so!” returned Doppelstaub, in no wise disconcerted; “chust so! ’istorical tocuments! and the most necessary ding to do with

documents is to make them legible. How could we read de documents if dey vas all smothered up with ivy?"

"I maintain it to be sheer vandalism!" said Alford: "and I am quite sure that I shall have the vast majority of all who ever come here on my side. And I do assure you," he added, turning to the others of the party, "that all the talk about reading the documents is, in this case, mere nonsense. All the reading of them by all the archæologists has had no other result than endless disputes, and an amount of hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness, which it is frightful to contemplate. You will see an enormous quantity of ruins, to each of which different names, and purposes, and characters have been assigned by different learned antiquarians. One guide-book follows one authority and another follows a different authority. And no human being can say which is right, or can ever know anything about it."

"That is a comfort any way!" said Reginald Smith.

"No doubt there *are* people to whom ignorance is very comfortable!" said the Rev. Athanasius Abbott, casting a glance of withering sarcasm at the poor little Cockney.

“Surely such a scene as this has something to tell us of the lives of those who raised these walls,” said Walter Weston modestly.

“Unquestionably it has—an immense deal!” rejoined Alford. “But the story these walls have to tell must be made legible by the light of a lively and sympathetic imagination, and not by the vandalism of despoiling them of the beauty with which Nature had clothed them. It is desirable to be able to assign a ruin to the period to which it really belongs, and this, in many cases, can be done only by examining the structure of the masonry or brickwork. But in this case there is no doubt at all as to the builder of these walls, or as to the period when they were raised. We all know that they were built by the Emperor Hadrian towards the close of his life, in the first quarter of the second century.”

“So that nearly eighteen hundred years have passed since human hands were working here to place these stones one on another. To think of all that has come and gone in that time!” said young Anderson, turning to pretty Marguerite Tomkynnes.

“Those were exactly the thoughts that were passing through my mind at that moment!” replied the sympathetic young lady.

Young ladies *are* so prompt to sympathise with the thoughts of young gentlemen who drive their own handsome equipages! It is a law of nature.

“You don’t mean to say, Weston, that you approve of the stripping of the ruins in the interest of archæological science?” said Alford, returning to his grievance.

“No, indeed! They were *so* beautiful as I remember the place when I first saw it. And to me the old walls seemed to speak more eloquently, clothed, as they were, by kind Nature’s reverential hand, than they do now in their nakedness!” returned Weston.

“Of course they do to any one who has a grain of poetry in his composition. I thought such a lover of the beautiful as you are could not be in favour of the destruction that has been done here. But we won’t be drilled and driven into being archæologists willy-nilly, will we, mesdames?” continued he, turning to the ladies of the party. “Trust me, this is one of the cases in which ignorance is bliss, and where it is folly to be wise, with the wisdom which the archæologist would thrust upon us. What we have to do is to revel in the wonderful beauty of the spot, as it exists, despite all the uglifying efforts

of the Cavaliere Rosa; and fill our eyes and minds with the poetry of the place, and feed our imaginations with the traces and evidences of the old pagan luxury and civilization, without troubling our brains with insoluble questions as to the purpose of this or that portion of the ruins!"

"Bravo, Alford! I am all for not troubling our brains!" ejaculated little Courtney Smith.

"What does it signify," continued the young painter, without noticing this interruption, "whether these remains are those of a temple or of a theatre? We know that more than one of each of these classes of buildings was comprised within the limits of the Imperial Villa; and that knowledge contributes much towards enabling us to form an idea of the wealth, power, and profusion of the planner of these enormous preparations for the pleasure of one man. But what matters it which was the temple, and which the theatre? If we could learn what was the purpose of every portion of the ruins, and what their exact relative position with regard to each other, it might do something toward enabling us to form a correct conception of the daily life of those who lived here. But such knowledge is beyond all hope. And the attempt to attain it only leads to sterile



and interminable disputes among the different would-be authorities."

"Just think what a walk this must have been under the arcades that, as one can still see, must have run along the entire length of this wall!" said Marian Atkins, as most of the party proceeded to pace along the Imperial promenade, the lofty wall of which still offered shade, though arches and pillars have all vanished. "Can any one conceive anything more delicious than pacing such a colonnade, with such a prospect before one's eyes as this one offers?" continued she.

The landscape, which is to the right hand of one walking under the shadow of this mighty wall in the direction which points towards the Campagna and Rome, is in truth one of rare beauty. The hill of Tivoli, with its slope clothed with oak, and its summit crowned with olives of a magnificent growth, rises in front of the spectator. Fragments of villas, once the *deliciæ* of the wealthiest and most luxurious among the masters of the world, may be descried among the trees. Along the crest of that portion of the hill which stretches farthest into the plain of the Campagna run the buildings of the town, which, whatever they may be when you

are among them, are eminently picturesque as a feature in the landscape. And a little further still than where the hill of Tivoli rises from the flat of the Campagna, the small conical eminences of S. Angelo and Quintiliolo, rising each of them in a singularly isolated manner from the plain, and each crowned with buildings on its apex, diversify the prospect. But for the production of such beauty as he looks on who sees all this from the colonnaded walk, along which the party of our friends are pacing, the whole of the elements of the scene must be bathed in the all-glorifying Roman light. Those who have never experienced the fact cannot be expected to believe to its full extent in the beautifying quality of the Roman atmosphere.

“Hadrian, master of the Roman world, and absolute lord of all that it could contribute to pleasure and enjoyment! I wonder if he was very happy here?” mused Marian, as they continued to saunter along the terrace, in the shadow of the huge length of the wall.

“No, not a bit of it!” said young Anderson, who was walking by her side. “Depend upon it, he never spent so happy a day here in all his life as you will, I hope, spend to-day. No;

the emperor who created this immense villa for his own personal gratification was anything but a happy man; at least, during the few years that he passed here."

"Is that known to have been so?" asked Colonel Hallery, who was following the before-mentioned couple down the walk by the side of Miss Alderney, while Major Danby walked on the other side of her.

"It is, at all events, one of those statements which I find it extremely easy to believe," said Miss Alderney.

"We know quite enough to be perfectly sure that such must have been the case," returned Anderson. "He built this villa towards the close of his life, after seventeen years of almost constant journeyings through every part of his huge and overgrown empire. And while living here he was guilty of acts of cruelty and tyranny as odious as those which had signalized his first accession to the purple. Ceaseless fears and suspicions impelled him to order the death of many senators and other leading men of Rome. And he would have consigned to destruction many more had not his ferocious orders been disobeyed by better men, to whom the execution was entrusted. When he had sur-

rounded himself here with all that he had seen in his travels most conducive to human happiness, as he imagined, he plunged into excesses of debauchery, that very soon brought their due Nemesis with them. He fell into a miserable state of health, and after a short period of the utter misery of realizing the truth that all his power was unavailing to enable him to enjoy the preparations for happiness which nothing short of Imperial power could have sufficed to heap together, and that all was dust and Dead Sea apples in his mouth, he went to Baicæ, by the order of his physicians, and died there. No; Hadrian's Villa never gave him as much enjoyment as it will give us to-day!"

"Why, Anderson, Oxford has made you a Doctor of Divinity already, I think! You have quite a talent for pulpit eloquence!" laughed Alford.

"Mr. Anderson's statement is accurately in accordance with authentic history," said the Rev. Athanasius Abbott, who was walking with Miss Lucie Tomkynnes; "but he might have added a circumstance which of itself is sufficient to account for and explain the blight that fell upon him. He was a noted persecutor of the Church."

"I should almost have expected that such an unreasonably enormous preparation for enjoyment would turn out to be a failure," said Marian Atkins musingly. "Happiness, I think, has to come to one. It is generally no use to travel huge distances out of one's way to go in search of it."

"Anderson may have preached a very good sermon, as Alford accuses him of doing," said Walter Weston; "but, for my part, I do think that such a sermon on the old text, *vanitas vanitatum*, as these huge ruins of a place dedicated to pleasure, was never preached before or elsewhere!"

"I think you seem to have got into a very solemn strain of talk, young people. But, talking of the vanity of human wishes, did anybody think of ordering the hampers with the provend—as Ford is so fond of calling it in his Spanish guide-book—to be brought up from the place where we dismissed the carriages?" said genial, cheery Mrs. Atkins.

"I did, ma'am; for 'though on preaching I am bent,' as Johnny Gilpin said, with a difference, 'I have a hungry mind.' I told my man to help yours and Mrs. Tomkynnes' servants to carry them up to the *fattore's* house," replied Anderson.

“Bravo! I appoint you on the spot our master of the revels,” returned the lady.

“I never march so willingly as when I have perfect confidence in the Commissary-General. And it seems to me that Mr. Anderson shows considerable talent in that line,” said Major Danby.

“But I vote we do not lunch at the *fattore’s* house. We can find some pleasanter spot than that,” said Mrs. Atkins.

“I have a place in my eye! I will show you the most delicious spot for the purpose that can possibly be conceived. I will tell the servants where to make their preparations. The *fattore’s* house is all on the road to the place I mean,” said Alford; “but now let us go on as far as the end of this terrace, for the sake of the outlook from the further end of it.”

They had been slowly sauntering in the shade at the foot of the wall, from which the arches had once sprung that had converted the terrace into a covered arcade, and were now nearly at the end of it. Thence, looking across the little valley hollowed out by the streamlet of the Alpheus, the view ranges over the Campagna towards Rome, the haze above which marks its exact locality. When the light is favourable,



or at a little before sunset, the cupola of St. Peter's may be distinguished; though it is seen better from somewhat higher ground hard by. There were light clouds in the sky, which a gentle breeze was slowly driving across it in such sort as to mottle the whole extent of the Campagna with lights and shadows, that changed places every minute and chased each other up and down the undulations of the surface, alternately bringing in view and concealing ruined castles, solitary tombs, huge lines of ancient aqueducts and modern villas. A view more lovely, and lovely with a loveliness specially and uniquely its own, utterly unlike anything in all the world beside, could not be imagined. They all stood gazing for a while under the spell of that strange sadness and melancholy with which it is the special and singular characteristic of the Roman Campagna to tinge the mind. Every one feels that it is beautiful; and, though the beauty is of a very subtle character, the causes and component parts of it may readily be analysed and understood. But the peculiar and ineffable sadness of the Campagna, of which almost every one is equally sensible, is far more difficult to be accounted for. It is to a great degree uninhabited and

unproductive. But so to a yet greater degree are parts of the English southdowns. Yet far from sadness being a characteristic of the latter, a more cheerful and spirit-bracing exercise than a walk over their short green turf cannot be found! Is the cause to be found in the historical associations with which every inch of that blighted soil is rife? There is, indeed, in those reminiscences wherewithal to sadden the most cheerful spirit; but the influence I am speaking of is felt by many whose ignorance of all such lore would, one might have thought, have protected them from any such malady of the mind. Perhaps the main cause of the unmistakable effect in question may be the evidence, which is offered by everything of which the eye can take cognizance, of human failure; of the ineffectiveness of human effort; of the irresistible overruling of events, which has brought so much of the results of the activity of some of earth's greatest and most powerful to *this*!—to desolation and palpable decay—to rendering the earth unfitted for the habitation of man, instead of subduing it to his use and well-being!

The whole party remained for some minutes silently gazing at the scene before them; and

then turning, retraced their steps along the terraced walk at the foot of the wall nearly as far as the point at which they had first reached it : nearly, but not quite so far ; for at a point in the wall a little nearer to the far end from which they were returning there is a magnificent archway, one of the finest remaining entire in the whole ruins. On the other side of the wall there is a vast oblong open space evidently levelled carefully by the hand of man. This is generally called the Campus Martius, or parade-ground ; and certain remains of numerous small chambers around it, which probably were the soldiers' lodgings, seem to indicate the probability that such was the destination of the space in question. It is not large enough for manœuvres on a large scale, such as the Campus Martius, belonging to a large city, is intended for ; but abundantly spacious enough for the parade-ground and display of such palace troops as may be supposed to have been permanently quartered in the Imperial Villa. And the archway which has been spoken of was probably the main entrance to this parade-ground. The party passed under it, and found themselves at once in the unmitigated blaze of the sunshine.

“Oh, what a change!” cried Miss Alderney, while the other ladies put up their parasols in all haste; “it is like passing from the temperate to the torrid zone!”

“I declare I am afraid to encounter the glare and heat of crossing this unsheltered space! Had we not better keep in the shadow of the ruins?” said Mrs. Tomkynnes.

“We shall find shadow on the other side. We shall cross in less than five minutes. And I particularly want to show you the view seen through this arch from the other side of the Campus Martius, as the learned have decided to call this,” said Alford.

So they all “screwed their courage to the sticking place,” and, stepping out into the blazing sunshine, stopped neither to talk nor to look till they had reached the shade of the ruined wall on the other side; not such a wall as that remaining on the opposite side of the Campus Martius, but fragments of buildings more than sufficiently high to make the shade they so much desired.

“A little more this way,” said Alford, who evidently knew the exact spot to which he wished to lead them; “a little more to the right! Now turn round and look at the view

through the archway we left on the other side."

What met their eyes was indeed well worth the trouble they had taken to reach it. In the immediate foreground was the open space of the Campus Martius, golden brown with short coarse grass burnt to amber-colour by the sun, and gilded by his light till it looked as if it were burnished. On the fragment of a column lying by itself out in the midst—how or when transported thither who can guess!—sate a shepherd, the only human being save themselves in sight. None but those who know the Roman Campagna and its surrounding hills can tell what singularly and suggestively picturesque figures those Roman shepherds are. Clad in a sheepskin jacket, prepared with the wool on the outside, and worn indifferently in the hottest and coldest weather—good, as its wearer would not unphilosophically tell you, to keep the warmth *in* during the winter and *out* during the summer solstice—in short leather breeches, sheepskin sandals bound and bandaged round the legs in a fashion which doubtless has not changed in these regions for two thousand years and more, and in a high, peaked felt hat decked with a coloured ribbon, and holding in

his hand the long staff—generally a mere rod rather than a crook—wherewith he rules his flock, and *leads*, not drives, them to the pasture, it is impossible to conceive a figure more tempting to an artist's pencil. A few sheep were lazily grazing on the coarse brown grass; and their companion, guide, and friend sat there as tolerant of the scorching rays of the sun, as peacefully tranquil, and to all appearance as vacuous of any mental processes, as they.

“He is worth his weight in gold, as he sits there on that marble fragment in the foreground, and imparts to the scene that same impression of unchanging, time-defying repose which is so wonderfully given to the Egyptian landscape by those eternal-looking sitting figures of gods and goddesses in granite and basalt. I must have him,” said Alford, pulling out his pocket sketch-book, and hurriedly sharpening a pencil; “you others, fill your eyes and minds and memories the while, with all the features of the scene before you.”

It was good advice. The level space of the Campus Martius, on which they were standing, being considerably raised above the level of the neighbouring portions of the Campagna, the old shepherd and his sheep were seen against



the soft blue sky of the low horizon. Then to the right of them came the end of the long wall, where, on the other side of it, our friends had stood and looked over the Campagna. Then, carrying the eye along the wall, came the archway under which they had passed; and, as they looked through it at that distance, the most lovely little bit of landscape set in the frame furnished by it, that eyes ever rested on. The two isolated pinnacles of S. Angelo and Quintiliolo, seen against the pure blue of the sky, with the buildings on them dazzlingly white in the sunshine; the well-contrasted olive-covered hill, crowned by the astonishingly massive ruins of the Villa of Quintilius Varus, where Horace was often a guest; then the westernmost part of the crescent-shaped town of Tivoli, and the magnificent cypresses of the Villa d'Este, make as perfect a little gem of a landscape as the most poetically minded painter could devise, if he had the ordering of it at his pleasure. Still further to the right, beyond the archway in that direction the view is completed by other masses of the ruins, making that unending variety of lines and forms which only the ruins of extensive buildings ever offer. The colouring, too, is all that can be desired. For the varied

greys and mellowed reds of stone or brick are mingled with and relieved by a vast variety of verdure.

Having, as Alford bade them, filled their minds and memories with the beauty spread out before them—or at least such of them as were capable of such a task having done so,—the party proceeded to wander among the labyrinth of ruined halls, and arches, and corridors, and stairs, with ever-increasing astonishment at the immensity of the quantity of building which still remains to show what this wondrous Villa must once have been ;—Herr Doppelstaub insisting, as they rambled on from one mass of ruin to another, in pointing out that this was a theatre, and that a library, and the other a temple, and those again the special apartments of the emperor ; whilst Alford was equally anxious to make them observe and enjoy each most exquisite point of view and happiest combination of objects and effects.

I do not know whether the observation of others may go to support the notion, but it has often seemed to me that landscape painters love their art with a greater enthusiasm of absolute and unadulterated love for the beautiful than

any other class of artists. Is it that the absolute perfection of beauty is produced by no hand save Nature's own? Any way, my friend Alford is an instance in favour of my theory; for never was a man who loved his art with a more absorbing love.

This rambling among the ruins is most enjoyable; and that it is so is due to the Cavaliere Rosa. If his management of the place has raised a storm of disapprobation in respect of the destruction of the ivy and other creepers, which added so much to the beauty of the ruins, there can be but one opinion as to the greatness of the boon conferred on the public by the gardenlike laying-out of the ground on which the ruins stand. What has been done in this respect not only adds much to the beauty of them, but renders the visiting of them agreeable to all, and possible to some. For to ladies it would have been impossible, or nearly so, to make their way among the impediments caused by such a growth of brambles and underwood as this climate produces in a very short space of time. As it is, judiciously cut and well-kept walks conduct the visitor to every portion of the ruins;—to every portion, that is to say, in that part of the immense enclosure—ten miles

in circumference, we are told—which has as yet been subjected to this treatment. This is far from extending to the whole of the space known to have been occupied by the Villa. But the buildings, which may be found by those who will take the trouble of wandering over the other parts of the domain, are much inferior in number, in importance, and in beauty, to those which have been rendered easily accessible. In another respect, also, the management of Signor Rosa has been eminently judicious. The wonderfully varied growth of trees and shrubs has been carefully preserved and tended. And it would be difficult to exaggerate the value of these in enhancing the beauty of the ruins. Nature, unerring as usual, has combined her varied greens in these shubberies with the happiest and most delightful effect. From the tender green of the young shoots of the arbutus to the deep rich velvet of the stone pine, and the dark shades of the cypress, the variety is infinite, and the beauty produced as unending.

After rambling about among these walks for some couple of hours our party of friends began to feel themselves reminded that the usual hour of their luncheon was somewhat passed, and to

be conscious that an entire morning spent first in a drive across the Campagna, and then in walking and lounging in the open air, was more conducive to appetite than the lapse of the same number of hours passed in a drawing-room. And somewhat pressing inquiries were addressed to Alford, who had instinctively on his own part, and by tacit common consent on the part of his friends, assumed the office of commander-in-chief, as to whether their wanderings had brought them at all near to the spot which he had destined as their *al fresco* dining-parlour.

“You will be there in ten minutes,” said he; “I have kept count of the time; and I guessed you would be about ready to look into the contents of those huge hampers. We have only the length of the Vale of Tempe to traverse; and if the servants have been as punctual as I have, you will find all ready for you.”

“Vale of Tempe!” cried Anderson, who was walking with Nora Atkins on his arm, having monopolized that young lady all the morning to the exceeding disgust of Reginald Smith, who had been obliged to content himself with the companionship of Miss Lucie Tomkynnes, not much more to the contentment of that fair

damsel. "Vale of Tempe! Why I thought that was in Thessaly."

"Right enough in your geography, old fellow. But our emperor, the world-travelled Hadrian, had a fancy for reproducing here all that most excited his admiration in the course of his travels. He had been extremely pleased with the far-famed Vale of Tempe. Therefore a Vale of Tempe must needs be produced at the foot of the hill of Tivoli. There it is—that rather deep depression of the soil, with a little rill at the bottom of it, to the right of our path. It does not look as if it were likely to be much 'zephyris agitata,' does it? What is more to our present purpose, however, is that our lunch awaits us at the further end of it."

The path they were following—one of the most charming in the grounds of the Villa—runs along the margin of the little ravine, which is said, with good appearance of probability, to have been what Hadrian chose to call the Vale of Tempe, till it reaches a spot at the extremity nearest to the foot of the ascent to Tivoli. There the path, as at present made, terminates in a sort of rather elevated platform, formed by the flat roof of some substructures, consisting of a number of small chambers, the former use of



which has not, as far as I am aware, been made the subject of conjecture by any of the antiquarians. There is nothing of special interest about them, save that the little terrace formed by the flat roof, which was once probably the floor of other superimposed rooms, is one of the most beautiful spots to be found among the ruins. Immediately in front—on the Tivoli side, that is to say—there is a specially rich assemblage of evergreen trees and shrubs, the fine stone-pines, among which are some high enough to throw the little terrace into shadow, while both they and the luxuriant bay-trees among which they stand, fill the whole air with a delicious fragrance. This was the spot destined by Alford for the picnic festival. And there the servants of Mrs. Tomkynnes, Mrs. Atkins, and Mr. Anderson had, with all the understanding of such matters that belongs to an experienced Roman servant accustomed to live in foreign families, spread the feast.

There was a general shout of delight at the beauty of the spot the commander-in-chief had selected, and a unanimous declaration that they were so much obliged to him for his happy thought of a picnic at the Villa. Mrs. Atkins was the first to seat herself, saying, as she did so—

“I shall place myself here, where I have before my eyes that superb hill, on which—what did you say his name was?—the friend of Horace—Quintilius Varus built his villa. To my thinking he chose a finer situation than Hadrian did.”

“Perhaps his Imperial Majesty did not find the sight of Rome in the distance, as Varus had it from the hill yonder, with all its reminders, so agreeable an object!” said Anderson.

“Perhaps he liked it no better than another royal builder of a palace liked the prospect of St. Denis!” rejoined Walter Weston.

“There is a capital seat here, Miss Alderney,” said Colonel Hallery, “and if you and Mrs. Atkins will permit me to have the pleasure of placing myself between you, I shall have a prospect before me, which I will venture to say neither the emperor nor the king would have objected to,” added the colonel, pointing to a huge raised pie that graced—not the board, but—the table-cloth spread on the flat tiles of the terrace.

“I think we can find seats here, my dear madam,” said Major Danby, addressing Mrs. Tomkynnes, as he placed her and himself opposite to Mrs. Atkins, “and if you agree with me

in thinking Hallery's notions of the sort of prospect most desirable on the present occasion correct, we shall not be badly off."

The young people arranged themselves to the perfect satisfaction of all parties, save in the one instance of Lucie Tomkynnes and Reginald Smith, who would both have preferred a different arrangement. But in such matters, and in so numerous a party, the perfect contentment of all save two will be considered, by those who have much experience of these things, a signal success. The morning's ramble had apparently sufficed to produce a very comfortable degree of intimacy between Anderson and Nora Atkins. Alford, sitting next to Marian, had nothing further to ask the gods. Mr. Abbott and Marguerite Tomkynnes were, as every one knew, a well-assorted pair. Herr Doppelstaub was invited by Mrs. Tomkynnes, who considered him to be a sort of lion that might be invited to her parties with advantage, to place himself on that side of her which was not supported by the gallant major; and Walter Weston slipped into a seat by Mrs. Atkins, who had the colonel on her other side.

"How is it," said that lady, looking round, "that we have more gentlemen than ladies? I

thought we had been in even numbers. Oh, it is because Miss Marie Tomkynnes has not joined us. We had counted on you for four ladies, Mrs. Tomkynnes."

"Such a disappointment for my poor Marie! But her time is so occupied. The dear princess was expecting to receive the French cardinal this morning, and she very much wished that Marie should be with her. It was impossible to disappoint her."

The apology was very graciously received, eliciting no comment save that of a laughing glance of mutual intelligence which passed between Marian Atkins and Alford—a prompt dismissal of the subject which probably somewhat disappointed Mrs. Lespinasse Tomkynnes, who would have preferred that her daughter's avocations should have been made the subject of some further discussion.

And then came that clatter of knives and forks, and plates and glasses, and laughter and talk across the table—table-cloth, that is to say—which on such occasions makes so acceptable a cover for the lower tones of those of the party who prefer addressing themselves to one pair of ears only. Herr Doppelstaub came out in great force with learned explanations of the different

destinations and purposes of the variety of buildings they had been gazing at; and Mr. Abbott showed that he was by no means unfurnished with information and reading on the subject. So that, as a natural and necessary result, those two gentlemen had, by the time the repast was over, each of them reached the comfortable conclusion that the other, however good a fellow he might be in a general way, was the greatest ass and most ignorant blockhead that ever talked on a subject he did not understand. Colonel Hallery told stories of the picnics he had shared in those grounds before many of those present were born, or thought of. Major Danby's jovial voice was frequently heard contributing to the jocund chorus, though if any one of the party had been asked afterwards what he had said, no one of them would have been able to report any other articulate words than, "'Pon my soul, madam!" and "By George, sir!" As for what passed between those of the little party who spoke rather to their immediate neighbours than *pro bono publico*, it would be an unpardonable indiscretion to reveal any word of it. It was abundantly evident that they were all highly enjoying themselves; and when the last glass of champagne was emptied "to their next merry

meeting," it was agreed on all hands that a more successful picnic had never been known.

When a cup of coffee, for which the girls had boiled the water over a gipsy fire, had been enjoyed, and the men had finished their cigars, the sun was already low in the heavens. The carriages had been ordered to come down from Tivoli for them at sun-down; but Alford declared that there was one more sight which they must enjoy before starting on their way homewards—the sunset seen from the top of the high bank that shuts in the long narrow space which is considered, and in all probability correctly, to have been the hippodrome, or race course. Some of the elders shook their heads—not very decisively;—but the unanimous voices of the younger members of the party, which pronounced in chorus in favour of “the sunset by all means,” carried the day. So they strolled away towards the hippodrome much in the same order as they had seated themselves at their luncheon, Alford and Marian leading the way. On reaching the bank, which has been mentioned, it became at once evident that a more advantageous spot for the witnessing of the spectacle which Alford had promised them, could not have been selected. They were raised just high



enough above the ground in the immediate neighbourhood of them to command an uninterrupted view of the low horizon to the westward of the Campagna. It was disputed among them whether a faint hazy stripe of more silvery hue than the rest of the distance were a glimpse of the Mediterranean or not. Certainly the horizon towards which they were looking was so low that it might have been ; and it is very clearly seen from the hill of Tivoli above them. However this may have been, it was evident that their view of the sunset would be a perfect one ; and they sate themselves down on the fragment of a low red-brick wall to wait the short time that must yet elapse before the spectacle would begin.

Gradually, as they sate, the ripple of talk ceased among them and became still. Nature has among her choicest shows, scenes of such wondrous beauty that they seem to fill the heart too fully to admit of the exchange of words. And such a sunset as that over the Roman Campagna, seen from such a spot as that occupied by our friends, is among the number of them. The glory of the western heavens, and the even more significant if less grandiose glory of the ruins, which assumed in the last slanting

rays hues which no pigments on the cunningest painter's brush could emulate, were beyond all words magnificent and wondrous.

It was not till the last smallest segment of the red glowing disc had disappeared that a sigh, produced by a combination of feeling which it would be difficult to define, burst from the breasts of most of them, as they rose in silence, and turned to walk towards the entrance of the Villa.

Then there was the due wrapping of the ladies, and donning of great coats, before getting into the carriages for their return. The drive across the Campagna by moonlight was to the full as pleasant, though perhaps somewhat quieter, than their morning journey. There are cases (and some of those who spent that day together at the Villa Adriana were fully disposed to agree in the assertion) in which the moonlight drive home from a picnic constitutes the most delightful and most memorable fact of the pleasures of the day. It is on the cards, I think, that two or three—it would be more accurate, though less usual perhaps, to say two or four—may look back on that picnic as the most memorable day in their lives.

Meanwhile, I will beg my readers to believe that *this* is the way to enjoy a visit to perhaps the most remarkable remains that the old Roman world has left to us, and not “doing” the Villa Adriana on the way to Tivoli.

END OF VOL. I.

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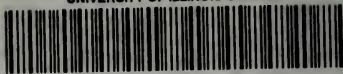


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